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Sebastian Moore
& Correspondents
THE RESURRECTION

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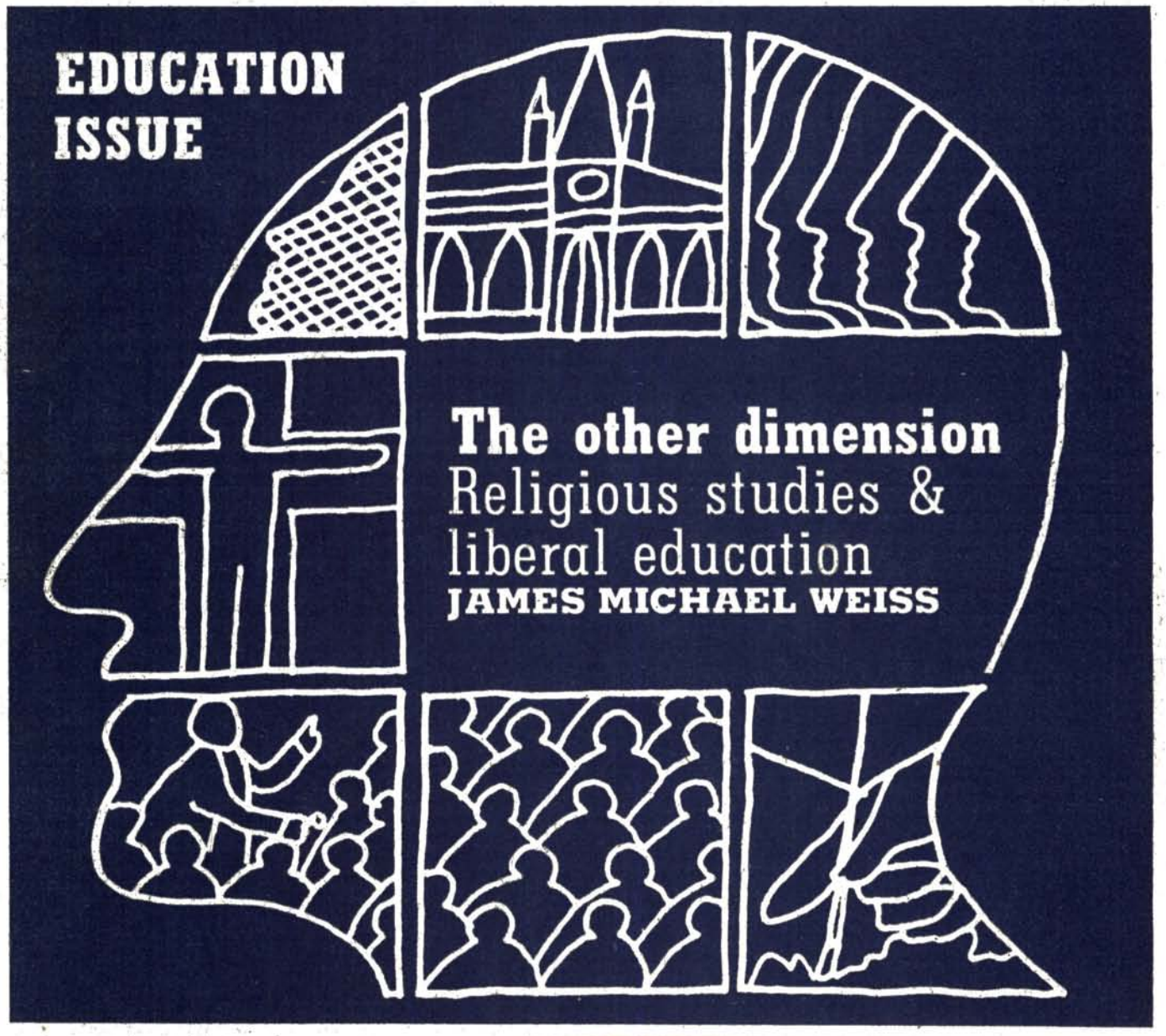

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Correspondence

Garvey's gem

Saxtons River, Vt.

To the Editors: John Garvey's "Necessary Nonviolence" [Feb. 12] is a gem of goodness, wisdom and necessity.

MARJORIE MURPHY

Able was I . . .

Fairbanks, Alaska

To the Editors: Where is Mt. Helena? [Editorial, Jan 29] When did it erupt? Does Napoleon know about this?

(REV.) LOUIS L. KENNER, S.J.

The resurrection event

Yakima, Wash.

To the Editors: As a long-time and devoted reader of *Commonweal*, I find myself driven to write to you to put some questions about Sebastian Moore's article "Experiencing the Resurrection" [Jan. 29]. Your rationale for years, as I have understood it, is the publication of commentary on public affairs, literature, and the arts by lay Christians for the laity and other interested readers, giving a non-ecclesiastical slant on these matters from a Christian (Catholic) point of view.

Presumably, then, you do not expect your "lay" readers to be theologians, or scriptural scholars, or sociologists, or political analysts, or liturgists, or anything else except what they are; namely, reasonably literate, reasonably educated, and reasonably concerned people hoping for a little enlightenment beyond that available in the regular sources of news and commentary.

My questions relating to Moore's article deal with his statement that scriptural scholars have determined that the resurrection events as recounted in the New Testament are no longer to be regarded as actual events as the accounts of the crucifixion are. Moore thus dismisses this problem to proceed with his nuanced (delicately) explanation of how we are to understand these New Testament events in Christ's life after the crucifixion. Well, as Elephant's Child would put it, "This is too buch for be." the lay reader, as such, if I can call myself an example, is required to make a tremendous leap across a void, then, in order to merely follow Moore through nuance, inflection, and innuendo. If this is where thinking in theology "is" at the present time, then the average lay Catholic has neither the background to follow it, nor the need for either theology or theologians and their La Putan world.

Christianity, I have always thought, is hard enough to believe, and always must have been, with its insistence that man live in two worlds. Even more difficult, it seems to me, would be the idea that this religion of hope could have survived for two thousand years believing in a resurrection which was but (as I read Moore) a created image of the risen Christ fostered by the Spirit in the minds of the Apostles, and giving them by this means, a conversion experience. I cannot be convinced either by his next nuanced leap to explaining how Christ thus becomes Lord and Judge of all creation. It sounds very much like the wishful thinking which modern day agnostics like to accuse Christianity of being. Furthermore, to my unnuanced understanding, such an idea does not sound different from similar pronouncements which I heard as long ago as twenty-five to thirty years ago from certain Protestant ministers who were trying to explain the resurrection of Christ in humanly understandable terms. (Trying to explain away the resurrection, we Catholics might grump disdainfully to ourselves.)

I realized recently something about the Christian approach to life, when I tried to explain to a young man of my acquaintance what the Unitarians believe. My garbled explanation, as I had gleaned it from a Unitarian friend of mine, was that they are a community of people trying to live courageously in a world without hope. My friend seemed very surprised, and then said that he guessed he understood what I meant, and that my explanation would be one way of putting it. He seemed to understand instantly what I had not really been aware of until then; Christians do live in a world of hope, and this means that their whole approach to life is colored by hope in ways they may be largely unconscious of.

Between Moore's idea of the resurrection, together with that of Schillebeeckx, whose ideas I have read before in your magazine, mostly with incomprehension, and the latter-day upsurge of fundamentalist Christianity, where can the ordinary Catholic Christian stand? Is there no writer who can give an overview of modern theology and its various trends, and the findings of scriptural scholars which at least would explain why the events of the crucifixion are actual, while the resurrection accounts are merely imaginative recreations inspired by the Spirit of those events? How do we account for St. Paul's experience? Is this too an imaginative recreation inspired by the Spirit? What do we now understand by his statement that unless we believe in the resurrection, our faith is dead? What of St. John's saying, "And we have seen his glory as of the only begotten of the Father . . ."?

In the post-conciliar world we have made much of the incarnation, and what it means, to correct, I suppose, an overspiritualized conception of Christ. Must we be asked to believe that the resurrection only happened as Moore says through memory conversations between the Apostles in which they come to realize that Christ would have forgiven them for their desertion, and that he must be somehow alive, since they could envision themselves being forgiven by him as they remembered his discourse and deeds? That's as difficult to believe, in fact more difficult for me to swallow,

(Continued on page 219)

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FROM BACK PAIN TO HEADACHE

"GETTING GOVERNMENT off our backs" is an irreproachable idea — unless it merely transfers pain to other sectors of the national anatomy. Higher education, for instance, has a headache — as do parents with children headed for, or already enrolled in, college. The 1983 Reagan budget requests a 54.2 percent cut in student aid programs for the 1983-84 academic year. Since the greater part of student aid subsidizes the middle class, slashing such programs is admittedly not so obviously unfair as gutting the food stamp program for the really poor. The distinction is important — though with interest rates as high as they are and expected to remain so, such moral subtleties may well be lost on middle-class parents with college age children.

The logic of Mr. Reagan's reversal of a thirty-year trend in public support for education is plain. You can't reduce tax revenues and greatly expand defense spending without taking a pound of flesh from somewhere, and that somewhere, besides social welfare, is obviously education. The president's Council of Economic Advisors, in its recent *Economic Reports of the President* submitted to Congress, suggests a further, questionable philosophic rationale: that while defense is an obvious "public good," education ought to be rated a *private* good. Hence no state subsidy. If the American people value education, as they seem to, let the demand pay for it.

Many, who now count on it, won't be able to do so. Demanders with no cash must presumably go without. The consequences for colleges and universities are as dire as they are for many students and their families. Take a typical example: Canisius College in Buffalo, New York. Half its students are on Pell Grants which go to clearly low-income students, and three-fourths of the whole student body depend on Guaranteed Student Loans, which amounted to $4.5 million this year. Together, that amounts to federal student aid to the tune of $6.5 million annually. Like others, the college is already hurting from last year's cuts which reduced student aid by $250,000. The 1983 Reagan budget spells a further loss to Canisius of $1,398,000, and a lot of empty seats. Nor is the situation up the street, at the state university, any better — with some 14.5 thousand students receiving $43 million in federal aid during the current year. In recession-staggered Buffalo, turning education into a "private" good is grim news. Not even Representative Jack Kemp seems willing to go along with the president on this one.

For many independent colleges and universities, the issue of government aid is a matter of life or death. On average, the federal government provides a sixth of their income, considerably higher than the proportion supplied state universities. (For some independents, like Stanford, the rate of federal support is far higher; try 54 percent.) "There is a real threat," asserts E. Alden Dunham of the Carnegie Corporation, "that literally hundreds of small private colleges may go bankrupt over

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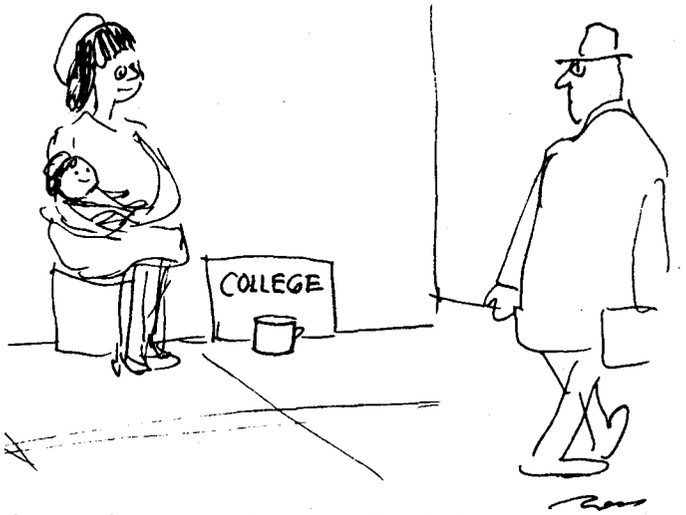

the next few years unless something is done." And as the independent colleges and universities turn to private sources for support, they'll be facing stiff competiton from state universities for the same funds. Nor are corporations likely to fill the gap. "How," complains Fred A. Nelson of the Atlantic-Richfield Foundation, "does a corporation justify continuing to make grants when it's laying people off?"

Testifying before Congress recently, representatives of the independent colleges and universities estimated the 1983 Reagan budget will lose them $1.25 billion. They guess that will force some 500,000 students to leave college or transfer to less costly institutions. And the transfers, says president Roscoe Brown of Bronx Community College, are bound to drive many of his less competitive black and Puerto Rican students onto the streets of the south Bronx. The addendum to this news is the budget's elimination of the so-called Trio programs designed to steer disadvantaged young people toward higher education, and to provide counseling and tutoring for those who enter college. It's estimated these programs annually reach 242,500 minority youth and 104,000 white teenagers. To cut aid to such groups makes conservative rhetoric about self-reliance and independence ring hollow.

Signs are, however, that Congress may not give Mr. Reagan what he wants in this area. Even Secrtary of Education Terrell H. Bell admits the cuts in aid are "harsh and austere." And Congress appears unwilling to go along with last year's "brilliant" budget strategy of a blind vote on the sheer size of federal spending. This year Congress is looking at items one by one. Already, in mid-March, the House Education and Labor Committee recommended $3 billion for Pell Grants, double the $1.4 billion the president had asked for. "You can't keep cutting the same programs over and over again," said Rep. Silvio O. Conte (R. Mass.), "and say that defense is sacrosanct.

In a similar mood, the House Education Appropriations Subcommittee recently rejected the Reagan proposal to impose sharp new restrictions on Guaranteed Student Loans — including the plan to bar graduate students from receiving them. It voted to recommend $1.3 billion for 1983 loans, enough to finance the program under current eligibility standards.

The battle of the budget is far from over, but pained parents and college officials seem to be getting their point across on the Hill. The prospect of a mighty military giant, they may be saying, will be no real defense if it means a brain drain.

VERDICT IN

It was a "test," Pope John Paul II told the assembly of Jesuit provincials who had gathered in Rome at the end of February to hear why the pope took the unusual step last October of appointing a personal delegate to run the order. The spirit of the pope's address on February 27 was one of reconciliation. The illness of the Jesuit's superior general, Father Pedro Arrupe, had provoked the intervention, the pope said, and he lavished praise on Arrupe, counselors of the Jesuit curial staff, and the order's membership for the spirit in which they had accepted the papal test. The pope confessed he'd been "edified": the Jesuits had passed the trial with flying colors.

The Jesuit provincials had been worried that they were in the midst of a constitutional crisis. At worst, the fear had been that the Vatican might indefinitely postpone the election of a new superior general for the order, and in the interim play monopoly chess in the appointment of conservative or reactionary Jesuit superiors. The pope banished these gloomy prospects by giving the green light to the election of a new superior general by year's end.

Some touchy points remain. Stitched into the pope's laudatory eighteen-page text were exhortations (1) to a narrower interpretation of the reforms initiated by Vatican II than perhaps many Jesuits consider either intellectually or pastorally justified; and (2) though the pope warmly endorsed action for social justice, he reiterated his anxiety that the priest's concern remain primarily spiritual and not that of a doctor, social worker, trade unionist or politician. The latter issue, according to Father Guiseppe Pittau, assistant to the pope's personal delegate, emerged as the most controversial matter for discussion at the provincials' Rome meeting. "We will need," he said, "to see how far it is possible to go; situations differ from one country to another and we must evaluate, with the consent of Rome, whether Jesuits can become directly involved in political, social, and economic activities when there are no laymen around who can fulfill these roles."

IN THE NEXT ISSUE:

Francis Flaherty reviews the constitutional background of today's debates about the separation of church and state.

Dorothy Esther Connors asks, "Quo vadis, women's movement?" Why the movement's not growing — and why it should be.

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Minnesota election

McCARTHY REDUX
THE RETURN OF A 'PUBLIC MAN'

ON MARCH 18, one day after St. Patrick's Day, Eugene J. McCarthy announced he was running for his old job as senator from Minnesota. He gave up that same job twelve years ago, endorsing longtime friend and rival Hubert Humphrey for the seat. That was when Humphrey was as out of fashion as Gene McCarthy is today. Humphrey's liberalism was out of vogue and tarnished by his mistakes. America is not kind in politics to yesterday's prophet, and Humphrey had to fight his way back in. He served a second apprenticeship in the Senate. He waited. Eventually the liberals and the opinion formulators began to see that whatever his faults and mistakes (and no man can spend thirty years in politics without making mistakes), he was a rare "public man." Nonetheless when he returned to the Senate he was not elected majority leader, he was not given the most distinguished committee assignments, and his last presidential campaign never happened because we were busy falling in love with an anti-politician named Carter.

Humphrey was that exceptional senator who brought the Senate honor rather than gleaning it. If McCarthy returns, this would also be true of him. Not that this prospect will necessarily lead people to listen to what McCarthy is saying now about corporate power or bureaucracy and the IRS. Nor will it induce ninety percent of the folk who owe Mr. McCarthy an abiding debt to lift a finger to elect one superior man to a Senate currently controlled by zealots and clods. But if he does make it back to the Senate the press will rejoice in having a quotable senator other than Barry Goldwater (Millicent Fenwick, running in New Jersey, would be quotable too). And though the liberals may do little to help him get there, as with Humphrey, they will forget this once he is back. They will remember '60 and '68, and all the articles in *Commonweal* and The *New Republic*. They'll remember all the speeches and appearances for causes and candidates no one else would support. They'll remember all the issues that were his alone ten or twenty years before anyone else knew they were there; militarism and the defense budget, the CIA, migrant workers, welfare mothers, Vietnam, civil rights, human rights, détente and disarmament, the automobile and the energy question, and on and on.

Indeed the nuclear freeze movement would do well to concentrate its efforts on congressional elections this year. If the movement does grow as it seems it could, it will need a senator or two who won't get cold feet. McCarthy has been rightly called "granddaddy of the peace movement." He was there in the 1970s when there was nothing but a skeleton; small sad groups all throughout the country teetering on despair. In the last ten years McCarthy has probably spoken to at least half of them. I have seen McCarthy at some of those meetings, like a father comforting the bereaved. Certainly, but for Humphrey on civil rights, no politician has been more consistently concerned or identified with an issue than McCarthy with peace and disarmament.

McCarthy's problems, of course, are not what Humphrey's were. Hubert's sin was that he played with the big boys. He was too serious a politician to seek refuge in innocence. In Reinhold Niebuhr's wonderful phrase, he sometimes needed to "cover himself with guilt." McCarthy's problem has been his dogged anti-heroism. A difficult man to follow because he is a kind of artist at politics: everything is intuitive; politics, like literature, is ironical and tragic. And as a creative art it begins in the initiator's head. Such a man does not conform, he sees things in his own way. McCarthy's pursuit of his idosyncratic convictions has sometimes seemed almost to be daring his supporters to disown him.

The McCarthy mystique, once the source of precisely the sort of admiration the Minnesotan abhors (this I think was the basis of his Kennedy phobia and in this too, he was prescient) should not distract us. McCarthy has enormous ability and an exceptional congressional record. He is in the great maverick tradition of the Senate, exemplified by men like Wayne Morse, Stephen Young, Ernest Greuning, and William Fulbright. Not easy men. Certainly not cult figures. But good and courageous senators.

In 1977 The *New Republic* wrote: "McCarthy's temperament is philosophical and reflective. But he is as much a practical liberal as a visionary."

In 1968 Walter Lippmann wrote; "The mission of Senator McCarthy is to do whatever a gifted and honest man can do to stop the rot in the American political system." "McCarthy," he said, "has come forward as defender of the American faith."

KEITH BURRIS

(Keith Burris teaches political science at Washington & Jefferson College in Washington, Pennsylvania.)

Report from Ireland

THE LEFT IN EIRE
SOCIALIST BALANCE OF POWER

BY THE TIME the Dail (the Irish Parliament) met on March 9 to elect a new government for the Republic after the inconclusive results of the mid-February general elections had allowed both sides to exude the confidence of victors, the election of Charles Haughey as Taoiseach (Prime Minister) and his Fianna Fail party was a virtual certainty. In the event about the only drama surrounding the occasion was when the three members of the left-wing Sinn Fein, The Workers' Party got locked out of the House for the crucial vote

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and had to enter by bursting into the press gallery and clambering over the party from the French Embassy in the Distinguished Visitors' Gallery. Their three votes, together with those of the two independents, the socialist Tony Gregory and the nationalist Neil Blaney, gave Mr. Haughey a comfortable margin of 86 votes to the outgoing Taoiseach, Dr. Garret FitzGerald's 79.

Up until the very morning of the day the Dail met the results was far from certain, however. Though Fianna Fail had gained 81 seats as compared to the 78 gained by the outgoing coalition of Fine Gael and Labor in the 166-seat Dail, the block of five socialist members were thought to lean to Dr. FitzGerald and with their support he could have formed the government. In an effort to secure just one of those votes and thus make his victory certain Mr. Haughey lavished his attention on the young socialist elected to represent the deprived inner city of Dublin for the first time, Mr. Tony Gregory, and won his vote with a detailed package of house-building, schools and industry for the area as well as the cancellation of a pet Fianna Fail project of a major highway. At an estimated cost of 80 million Irish pounds (about $120 million) it is the most expensive deal ever made in the history of the state to buy votes. As one Senator, Professor John A. Murphy of University College, Cork, commented: "There is an element of farce in the sight of a millionaire island-owner seeking to woo a representative of the poorest people in Dublin." The farce was compounded by the fact that the surprise support for Mr. Haughey from Sinn Fein, The Workers' Party made the deal unnecessary.

The unashamed effort to buy votes indulged in also by Dr. FitzGerald, who promised to change elements of the budget which had brought down his government in January, was only one element in the drama of those two-and-a-half weeks of "kingmaking." For they also saw both Fianna Fail and Labor tearing themselves apart with internal divisions coming out into the open with a bitterness rarely seen in Irish politics. For the small Labor Party, which had been in coalition with Fine Gael and which had fought the election on the basis of continuing that arrangement, it was their decision by a narrow margin in the early hours of the morning the day the Dail reconvened to vote for Dr. FitzGerald but not to continue in coalition which brought angry public exchanges between different factions in the party's leadership.

More important by far, however, were the divisions which rent Fianna Fail within a week of the election results in the unprecedented challenge to Mr. Haughey's leadership mounted by a group who have made little secret of their disaffection with that leadership, a mood strengthened by the opinion polls throughout the election which showed Mr. Haughey trailing Dr. FitzGerald in public popularity by more than twenty percentage points. The day of Fianna Fail's first post-election parliamentary party meeting began with a senior member of the party, Des O'Malley, declaring he would oppose Haughey for the leadership, thus confirming rumors that he had the support of a majority in the parliamentary party. However, what deals were made to win back some of those to support Mr. Haughey in the twelve hours which elapsed between Mr. O'Malley's announcement and the meeting itself will never be known. But deals there were as Mr. O'Malley, seeing he had lost support, withdrew his name at the beginning of the meeting.

After so much high drama, Irish politics must now settle down to tackling the country's acute problems. With inflation at 23 percent, unemployment at its highest ever with some 145,000 or about 11 percent of the workforce out of work, an enormous balance of payments deficit—the country's foreign debt has risen from around 1,000 million pounds when Mr. Haughey became Taoiseach in 1979 to some 3,700 million when he left it last June—and the country's budget delayed for two months because of the election, the incoming government will have to be seen to be more interested in solving these problems than in securing itself in office. It is, however, on the latter that Mr. Haughey has concentrated his undoubted talents since becoming leader of Fianna Fail much more than on the former. In excluding some respected members of the camp opposed to him within Fianna Fail from his new cabinet, most notably the exclusion of his challenger for the leadership in 1979, George Colley, who was deputy leader of the party, Mr. Haughey seems to have learned little in the way of magnanimity for the sake of the party's or, more importantly, the country's good.

Apart from economic issues, where a return to Mr. Haughey's record of reckless spending is nervously feared, the change of government will be most notable for its effect on relations between the Republic and the Northern Unionists (Protestants). It is not unimportant that some of those in the North who expressed sadness at Dr. FitzGerald's going were moderate Unionists. They had been very encouraged by his courageous insistence that the South would have to change those elements in its laws and ethos which made it objectionable to Northern Protestants, notably some elements derived from Catholic teaching such as its prohibition on divorce and its claim on the territory of the North. Change in these areas Dr. FitzGerald made his single most important goal, launching last September what he called a "constitutional crusade" in a famous radio interview during which he referred to the Republic as a "sectarian state."

This conciliatory stress on wooing the Northern Protestants he coupled with a more open approach towards the process of Anglo-Irish talks initiated by Mr. Haughey and the cooperation on areas such as economic exchanges and tourism which resulted from these. Where Mr. Haughey had preferred to keep the details of these secret, thus allowing the impression to be created that he was negotiating some deal with the British government over the North, which predictably alarmed Northern Unionists, Dr. Fitzgerald preferred the open approach and he published details of this cooperation thus showing just how non-contentious were the issues involved. Dr. FitzGerald also had good relations with the British Secretary for the North, Mr. Prior, whose efforts to out-maneuver the more extreme Loyalists such as Dr. Ian Paisley and to set up a new elected convention in Belfast in which moderate elements could dominate, were helped by the former Taoiseach's approach.

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Mr. Haughey, however, prefers to place himself in the traditional nationalist tradition and speaks about the fact that the Northern state has not worked and that no solution is possible within it. His policy is much more one of seeking an overall solution to the North in the context of talks with London, taking little or no account of the highly volatile feelings of the Northern Protestants, who by and large fear him and view him as a fellow-traveler of the Provisional IRA. Such a perspective casts Mr. Haughey in the unlikely role of a defender of the "Catholic" nationalism of the Southern state, staunchly defending its Catholic ethos and refusing to accept that there exist any elements of sectarianism in its laws.

For his courage in giving a rare burst of leadership in the Republic, Dr. FitzGerald will be sorely missed. He articulated openly what many young people have been feeling for years as their allegiance to Catholicism weakens and they seek a more liberal secular state less dominated by the church. Interestingly also, Dr. FitzGerald's controversial "constitutional crusade" never became an issue in the election and it certainly cannot be said to have told against him in the results, confirming that there is no popular will any more to defend the old "Catholic" nationalist shibboleths. The poor vote received by candidates of Provisional Sinn Fein, the political wing of the Provisional IRA, who stood in the election for the first time since the 1950s, also confirmed that the traditional nationalist issues are of little interest any longer. The only exception to this is at times of extreme tension in the North, as during the hunger strikes last year. However, the high vote received by candidates who were prisoners in Northern prisons when they were put up in the general election in the South last June, evaporated totally in this recent election, thus confirming the lack of any real interest in the Northern issue down here.

The waning of the traditional ideology which has dominated the southern state since independence raises the question about what may replace it. Part of an answer may lie in the increasing support for overtly left-wing candidates. Three new socialist candidates were elected in this election, all of them grassroots activists who have steadily built up their local support through their work among the unemployed and marginalized. Sinn Fein, The Workers' Party, a break-away group from the more traditional nationalist Provisional Sinn Fein in 1969 and who have consolidated their identity as a serious socialist party, added two more seats to the first one it received in last June's election. That these socialists hold the balance of power in this Dail as they did in the last (it was the vote of one Socialist Independent which brought down Dr. FitzGerald's government), a new development in Irish politics, makes them even more prominent nationally and is a serious worry to the traditional parties. It has even brought calls for a revision of our constituencies boundaries so as to make them smaller in order to ensure more stable majority governments, a polite way of trying to ensure the exclusion of the socialists.

Being dependent on at least one of these socialist votes in the Dail makes it unlikely that Mr. Haughey's new government will last its full five-year term. However, after a short government of only seven months and two elections in the same period few will want to face yet another election for a while. Mr. Haughey will probably last longer than Dr. FitzGerald and with his tenacious staying-power demonstrated so dramatically since the election, few will seek to oust him from the leadership of Fianna Fail without being sure of their support. What is certain is that there remain many within his parliamentary party and a few even in his cabinet who are only waiting for the day when they can do so with success.

One of the few certainties of this election for the future, therefore, is that the traditional stability of Irish politics, where either Fianna Fail or a coalition of Fine Gael, Labor, and small parties formed majority governments, looks as if it is well and truly over. And with issues of unemployment, of taxing speculators' and banks' profits, of redistributing income, of economic planning and controlling our own natural resources being voiced in parliament in a forceful and insistent way for the first time, a new socialist perspective is being introduced into Irish public life. The general election of February 1982 may in future years well be seen to mark a watershed in the development of Irish politics. It is a development that is long overdue for the hundreds of thousands of poor and marginalized in Irish society.

PEADAR KIRBY

(Peadar Kirby, a previous contributor, is an Irish journalist who lives in Dublin.)

Of several minds: *John Garvey*

THE REALITY OF EASTER

ARE LIBERALS EMBARRASSED BY ITS CLAIMS?

"I WAS ONCE, five or six years ago, taken by some friends to have dinner with Mary McCarthy and her husband, Mr. Broadwater . . . Toward morning the conversation turned on the Eucharist, which I, being the Catholic, was obviously supposed to defend. Mrs. Broadwater said that when she was a child and received the Host, she thought of it as the Holy Ghost, He being the 'most portable' person of the Trinity; now she thought of it as a symbol and implied that it was a pretty good one. I then said, in a very shaky voice, 'Well, if it's a symbol, to hell with it.' That was all the defense I was capable of but I realize now that this is all I will ever be able to say about it, outside of a story, except that it is the center of existence for me; all the rest of life is expendable."

This passage from *The Habit of Being*, Sally Fitzgerald's wonderful collection of Flannery O'Connor's letters, came to mind recently when I was trying to figure out what bothered me about some ap-

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proaches to scriptural interpretation and Christian doctrine. If the danger of conservative Christianity is its tendency towards legalism and fundamentalism, the danger of liberal Christianity is a kind of embarrassment before the claims of traditional Christianity. What we wind up with is pretty thin soup. I understand why we are offered this diet; it is easy to see what it is meant to remedy. As an alternative to fundamentalism, however, it is not only not adequate; it is hardly interesting.

There are interpretations of the resurrection, for example, which bypass the question of whether Jesus actually rose from the dead in order to consider the state of mind of the early church. The resurrection mattered to the faith of the apostles, according to this line of thought, and it is this faith which counts, not whether or not the event happened in time. The importance of the resurrection is to be found in the "faith experience" of the church.

It is almost an embarrassment to bring up the question of the empty tomb to someone who urges this point of view; you feel like Lenny in *Of Mice and Men*: "Tell me about the rabbits, George." But the belief that Jesus really rose has been central to Christianity. A strictly fundamentalist view of this doctrine may lead us to overlook some of the lessons the doctrine is meant to teach us; plainly the main significance of the resurrection is not the fact of a resuscitated corpse. Here some words of Simone Weil are brutally to the point: Hitler could rise from the dead a thousand times, she said, and she would never believe that he was the son of God. A miracle can be seen for what it is only where there is a prior faith, able to receive it; it would never convince someone simply as an historical or physical fact. To this extent what counts is the faith of the church, and not what a camera placed at the entrance of the tomb might reveal. Insisting on too literal an approach can make us less sensitive to the need for faith.

However, there is a way of talking about the resurrection which avoids fundamentalism by speaking of the way Jesus was, after his death, alive "in the lives of his disciples." Sounds pretty dead to me. There is something watery and insipid about this approach to the "faith experience" of the early church; it reminds me of the sort of thing liberal ministers who wanted to uplift everyone and offend no one used to trot out: "Those great men of history, Roosevelt, Gandhi, Lincoln, Jesus, and Plato. . . ." Intense experiences are a dime a dozen. They aren't enough to base a life on, especially not one which might take you to death, where experiences end for good. If Jesus lived only as any impressive dead person lives, there is no more reason to be a Christian than there is to be a Platonist. What is clear from Scripture, from the testimony of the early church, and what has been believed by orthodox Christians throughout history is that a man who was killed lived again, not as a ghost or as an appearance of his former self, but as someone alive with a new kind of life. He appears sometimes as a stranger, recognized "in the breaking of the bread" or in serving breakfast to his friends, who had gone back to their trade as fishermen and were hungry after a night of fruitless work. It is that mysterious one we should look to, realizing that whatever it was that happened at the resurrection it transcended all ordinary categories of experience, including the merely factual or historical.

Some interpretations of Scripture are resented not because they aren't fundamentalist enough, but because they offer a vision which doesn't look as rich or as comprehensive as the traditional sort. People understandably do not feel that they have found the pearl of great price when told they should move away from the question of whether a man really rose from the dead to a consideration of the state of mind of the early church. This is not only hopelessly academic; it isn't even the right way to tell a story.

What I think we are faced with is a fear of the marvelous. We are too time-bound, too prejudiced in favor of the categories acceptable to educated, middle-class modern Western white folks to consider the possibility that there really is such a thing as the miraculous, the marvelous, the uncanny, the supernatural. We want to explain Christian faith in terms which won't offend people to whom the idea of a miracle is scandalous (as if it weren't scandalous to first-century pagans, who considered Christians a credulous lot). Maybe this can't be done. Maybe the Western worldview which has prevailed since the Enlightenment is too limited. and needs shaking up with stories of multiplied loaves and fishes, transfiguration, and resurrection. In her excellent book *The Passionate God* (Paulist) Rosemary Haughton brings a wider vision to bear on the mystery of the Incarnation; anyone tired of thinner stuff should turn to Haughton's refreshing theology.

There have been some people about whom fantastic stories have been told. Only fantastic stories could tell the truth about them. They include not only Jesus, but Saint Francis of Assisi and the founder of Hasidism, the Baal Shem Tov. It is interesting that our first question about them is, "Why would people tell a story like that, unbelievable as it is," rather than "What if things like that could happen? What would that tell us about the sort of world we live in?" (One thing it tells us is that the world is not the safe, predictable place we thought it was.) The mysterious is a real dimension of human experience. It is made no less real by the fact that our culture isn't very good at dealing with it. JOHN GARVEY

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Of several minds: *Thomas Powers*

WHAT IS WAR?

FROM CLAUSEWITZ TO SHERMAN

FOR THE LAST thirty years of his life, Karl von Clausewitz (1780-1831), the great Prussian military writer, tried to complete the sentence, "War is . . ." The many attempts all add something to our knowledge of war, at once the most common and the least understood of human enterprises. But Clausewitz was never quite satisfied with the results.

In his major work, *Vom Krieg* (On War) — never finished and published only after his death — he tried to reduce war to its essence again and again. "War is an act of violence to compel our opponent to fulfill our will," he wrote on the first page of his book. Later he amended his definition to read, "War is an act of violence pushed to its utmost bounds." Even his best-known formula comes in many variations, all making the same point in slightly different words. His final choice is the one most often quoted. It was discovered after his death in a note apparently written in 1827. There he said, "War is only a continuation of State Policy by other means."

The austerity of this dictum has earned Clausewitz a reputation as the supreme rationalist of military thinkers. But in fact he was both romantic and passionate; in other circumstances he might have been a poet or scholar. It was history — the revolutionary upheaval which began in 1789 and ended at Waterloo in 1815 — that posed war as the central question of Clausewitz's life. He was introduced to war at the siege of Mainz in the summer of 1793, a thirteen-year-old cadet in a Prussian infantry regiment. On June 18 Prussian cannon opened fire on a trapped French revolutionary army. The city's wooden houses were soon in flames, food and water were in short supply, horribly wounded soldiers were left to die without care, clouds of smoke hung over the city as the awful cannonade went on for nearly five weeks.

The siege of Mainz was a brutal battle; perhaps five thousand French soldiers, as well as three thousand Prussians, died before the surrender on July 22. But Clausewitz, like any other boy in a uniform on the periphery of the worst horrors, was swept up by the thrill of the thing. "I stayed while Mainz was being burned to the ground in the fire we had started," he wrote later. "I added my childish shout to the triumphant cheers of the soldiers."

War was Clausewitz's life, as it was Europe's, for the next twenty-three years. He fought at the battle of Auerstadt in October 1806, where the Prussian army was shattered by Napoleon; in the terrible Russian campaigns of 1812, where the ravages of winter were as deadly as the rifle and cannon; and in the final battles of Napoleon's eclipse, ending at Waterloo. But the real theme of Clausewitz's life was thinking about war, not fighting. His romantic streak led him to write to his wife often of the beauty of death in battle, but his daily work focused on the reform of the Prussian army with his mentor and friend, Gerhard von Scharnhorst, and on saving the nation from the timidity of its king, Friedrich Wilhelm III, who was more interested in details of uniform than tactics, and always chose the wrong moment to fight.

The key to Clausewitz's thinking was the fact it grew out of a profound national crisis. During the years of Napoleon's dominance in Europe, the Prussia of Frederick the Great was reduced to the status of minor power, neglected and scorned. At times it seemed the kingdom might even be carved up and swallowed entirely by its more powerful neighbors. Clausewitz neither glorified war nor sentimentalized its horrors. He did not think of it as a tragedy to be avoided — a kind of natural calamity — but as the only possible solution to a genuinely desperate problem.

"Let us not hear of generals who conquer without bloodshed," he wrote. "If a bloody slaughter is a horrible sight, then that is ground for paying more respect to war, but not for making the sword we bear blunter by degrees of humanity, until someone steps in with one that is sharp, and cuts off the arm from our body."

This realism gives Clausewitz's thinking about war a business-like cast. He concerned himself with nothing but the political significance of the outcome, and it is here that he departs most dramatically from the traditional military mind. "The politician should fall silent the moment that mobilization begins," said the elder Helmuth von Moltke, chief of the Prussian General Staff, later in the century. It was this attitude which Clausewitz fought throughout his career. For him the objects of war and diplomacy were identical. Sometimes one method was appropriate, sometimes the other. Above all was the importance of a sense of proportion: military operations must be in scale with political goals, and risk commensurate with gain. One did not go to war lightly, nor seek more than was reasonable from victory, nor fight on senselessly when defeat was already clear. Like Clemenceau after him, Clausewitz thought war too important to be left to generals who care for nothing but who wins. For him the important questions were why wars start, and how they end. Military "victory" merely prepared the ground for acceptable terms of peace.

Hence his dictum, "War is only a continuation of State Policy by other means." Clausewitz tried to remove the mystery from war, to see it as the doing of men rather than the working of fate. This seems an entirely sensible approach to the problem. It offers a way to tame the chaos, give point to the suffering, and even limit the damage. But does it really describe what war *is*? Consider for a moment the background of Clausewitz's life — war upon war for two and a half decades, involving some of the greatest

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battles of history in which scores of thousands often died in a single day. In Napoleon's Russian campaign of 1812 alone, only a few thousands returned from a French expeditionary force of half a million. The rest were captured, died in battle, drowned crossing the River Berezina, starved, froze. Moscow was not the only city burned in those years. It all seems mild enough compared to World War II, perhaps, but Europe was exhausted for decades thereafter. The victors longed only to go back to 1789, to forget the intervening horrors. It is here that Clausewitz's dictum reveals its limits. If the victors wanted nothing from their victory but the way things had been, what were the Napoleonic wars *about*?

Throughout those years Clausewitz concerned himself with the fate of Prussia, threatened in 1792 and then crushed and in effect occupied after the military disasters of Jena and Auerstadt in 1806. First the army failed the king, and then the king failed the army. With the aid of Clausewitz and others, Scharnhorst rebuilt the Prussian army, but the timid king would not risk war again, despite abundant provocation. Napoleon was a master not only of battle, but of studied national insult. In 1812 he humbled Prussia yet again by forcing Friedrich Wilhelm to join his war against Russia and even to provide a 20,000-man corps. This was more than Clausewitz could bear. He was intoxicated with patriotic ardor; his letters of the time reveal a positive longing to die rather than witness further national humiliations. The king might submit, but not Clausewitz. He resigned his commission and left to fight with Russia, the last continental power still willing to resist Napoleon.

But if we join Clausewitz in explaining war as what properly follows the sort of provocation Napoleon visited upon Prussia, how do we explain this sort of provocation? War was not Prussia's doing alone, but Napoleon's as well. If we are to explain what war *is*, then we must account for both factors in the equation. It is not enough to say that war is sometimes necessary. The fact of its necessity is part of its nature.

At this point the mystery is reintroduced. The Napoleonic era was one of military cataclysms which, like the cataclysms of 1939-1945, are for convenience blamed on the overweening ambition, the charismatic power to lead, and the human recklessness of individual men — Napoleon in the first instance, Hitler in the second. We have no difficulty explaining why others chose to resist. Napoleon and Hitler crammed war down their neighbors' throats. It is the wars themselves, seen as a single dark whole, emerging out of nowhere, that leave us mystified when we try to say what war *is*. Looked at in this light William Tecumseh Sherman's definition — "War is hell" — serves better than Clausewitz's. Indeed it is hard not to conclude that Clausewitz was not defining war at all, but trying to give it a rationale, to find some thread of reason in the chaos, to rescue us from despair in the face of something so blindly destructive.

This aspect of war did not escape Clausewitz. "It is quite possible," he wrote, "for such a state of feeling to exist between two states that a very trifling political motive for war may produce an effect quite disproportionate — in fact a perfect explosion." It was "perfect explosions" which Clausewitz tried to prevent with his emphasis on policy. Clausewitz did not tell us what war *is*, but rather urged us to approach it in a mood of utmost sobriety.

The limits of Clausewitz's view are a matter of more than academic interest, for the simple reason we cannot hope to avoid war indefinitely if we don't know what it is. Ensuring that we do avoid it is, of course, the central question of our time. The destructive capacity of nations now is vastly greater than it was in Clausewitz's day. Modern delivery systems for nuclear warheads — missiles, manned aircraft, and submarines — are so constructed and controlled they might go on "fighting" after their sponsors were all dead. "Violence pushed to its utmost bounds" is now beyond the capacity of society to bear.

Both the United States and the Soviet Union appear to understand this fact. In 1958 Khrushchev told the Yugoslav ambassador to Moscow, "The Soviet Union will continue to fight stubbornly for peace, which we have especial need of for the next fifteen or twenty years. After that no one will be able to go to war even if he wants to." Khrushchev meant that war would be too terrible to make sense, and he was right. For both great powers the preservation of peace is thought to rest on a single point: the certainty of "unacceptable" consequences in the event of war. Guaranteeing that certainty is at the heart of every debate on weapons systems, and the effort has so far been a successful one. But it has not made us feel safe. We know war is irrational, but fear it anyway, without quite being able to put our finger on the ultimate source of danger. At the heart of this fear, I think, is the suspicion that war is not really policy — a rational enterprise — in the sense Clausewitz intended, but something darker and less predictable, something which happens to us without reason or purpose.

No statesman seems willing to concede this possibility, and it's not hard to see why. If the sheer horror of nuclear weapons is not sufficient guarantee they will never be used, then we are even closer to the edge than we generally allow ourselves to think. It is probably inevitable that we assume the choice for war is always ours.

But history seems to be telling us something different, and nowhere more clearly than in the years 1914-1918. Where do we find a thread of reason in that calamity? The war began and continued without rational motive, a collision of great armies which bled Europe until Germany collapsed in agony. We have lived too long with the results to believe the blind commitment to victory made sense. That, truly, was "an act of violence pushed to its utmost bounds."

Clausewitz did not shrink from this side of war. Few have written with such scorn of those who would include pity among its principles. But Clausewitz could not bear to think of war as violence alone. I think it must have been the poetic streak in his character which led him to insist that war has another face. When he came to sum up a lifetime of war and thinking about war, his objectivity failed him. He did not find reason at the heart of war, but only hoped to put it there.

THOMAS POWERS

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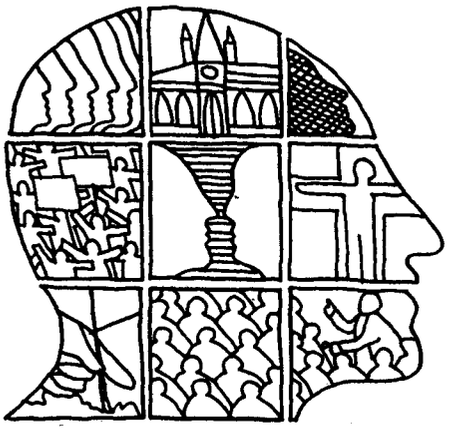

Studying the other dimension

JAMES MICHAEL WEISS

FOR MANY EDUCATORS in religion or in the humanities, the relations between religious studies and the liberal arts may seem necessary and self-evident. In my own studies of Erasmus and the history of modern Christian liberal education, for example, I have come to take such relationships for granted. But upon further consideration, it seems best not to treat this interdependence as an obvious matter. For it was not so taken in Erasmus's day, nor is it in ours. After all, Erasmus spent his best energies demonstrating the relation of the *studia humanitatis* to the formal study of theology. And still he was ignored, attacked, and rejected by leading theological faculties of his day.

In our day it is often the same, only that the tables have been turned. It is no longer the powerful faculties of theology which reject the liberal arts. Instead, as the vagaries of history would have it, the liberal arts have achieved an established status and, after centuries of enlightened trust in the unaided powers of reason and the secularization of culture, it is the advocates of religious study who are often on the outside pressing the claim to represent a legitimate academic discipline against the skepticism or suspicion of more established academic disciplines.

This attitude toward religious studies, and in particular toward theology, is not altogether unfounded. On the one hand, many sciences have a healthy suspicion of religion based on the arrogance shown to them by its advocates in previous ages. No one has forgotten the fate of Giordano Bruno, the treatment of Galileo, or the attacks on Darwin. And for good reason, many have not forgiven. On the other hand, when the theologians are not on their high horse, they just as often grovel to prevailing academic fashions as if they had nothing of their own of which to be proud.

These tensions between religious studies and the other humane disciplines remind me, however, of the border disputes in the Balkans which were so chronic and so superficial. For the chronic nature of inherited misunderstanding undermines the numerous common interests which unite religious and humane studies. And the superficial quality of their mutual suspicion keeps them from appreciating the deeper differences which truly and necessarily distinguish religious studies from the liberal arts. And so I shall take another cue from Erasmus, this time to imitate his irenicism. For I would like to treat of religious studies and the liberal arts in terms both of their interdependence and of their disjunction. These two aspects will appear more clearly if I treat first the material of religious studies, and second the method — or rather one particular method — employed in religious research. For, to suggest a correlation, I believe that the interdependence of religious and liberal studies emerges by considering the materials they confront together, while the disjunction between them results from the different methods they may employ.

Thus, like every other academic or intellectual discipline, religious studies treat a separate and specific sphere of human activity, a sphere which demands to be treated on its own terms. Theorists such as Rudolf Otto and Mircea Eliade call this the sphere of mystery as it is disclosed to man, and as man in turn makes it the object of worship, and takes this mystery as the ultimate source of truth and value in all his other activities.

This term mystery is a technical one and should not be confused with other common uses of the term. It does not mean a puzzle whose answer is deciphered by initiates, priests, or prophets. It does not mean some dogmatic proposition which defies logical sense. These are, I think, too often the senses intended by religion teachers too tired or too ill-prepared to tackle the subtleties of hypostasis, transubstantiation, or Trinitarian perichoresis. In this incorrect sense, mystery is used to mean something which defective human reason cannot grasp fully, but which one can try to understand to some degree and which is, in any case, a matter of intellectual assent. But this is not mystery in its true religious sense.

By mystery, theorists of religion mean that dimension of existence which is beyond our grasp, not because our grasp is limited but because that dimension in itself is wholly other. It is that which is incomprehensible, not to be grasped, perma-

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nently and truly a mystery. Like a piece of music which always reveals new depths, or like a friend who is more a mystery the more we love him or her, the experience of mystery in religion does not decrease as we become familiar with it, but becomes more a mystery the more we encounter it.

In his treatise on *The Idea of the Holy,* Rudolf Otto explains that "by this (mystery) is meant not only that of which nothing can be predicated, but that which is absolutely and intrinsically other than and opposite of everything that (exists) and can be conceived. (The) exaggeration (of) this negation and constrast (is) the only means to open conceptual thought to apprehend the (mystery)." In somewhat less academic form, St. John of the Cross expressed this absolute mystery after a mystical ecstasy:

I entered in, I know not where
And I remained, though knowing naught,
Transcending knowledge with my thought.
. . .
The farther that I climbed the height
The less I seemed to understand
The cloud so tenebrous and grand
That there illuminates the night.
For he who understands that sight
Remains forever, though knowing naught,
Transcending knowledge with his thought.
. . .
This summit all so steeply towers
And is of excellence so high
No human faculties or powers
Can ever to the top come nigh.
Whoever with its steep could vie
Though knowing nothing, would transcend
All thought, forever and without end,
. . .
The gift that leaves men knowing naught,
Yet passing knowledge with their thought.

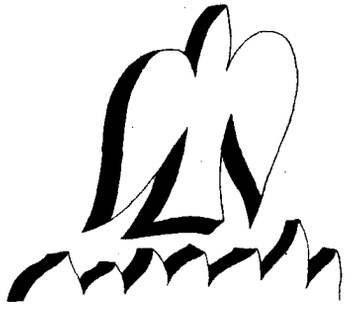
IN GENERAL, this mystery appears to the religious person or the religious society as a transcendent power, overwhelming by its terrible awesomeness but also by its irresistible allure. When this *mysterium tremendum et fascinans* appears on Sinai in Exodus 19 and dwells there some days before giving the Law to Moses, the Hebrews respond to both these aspects. For they are eager to receive the Lord's message, yet they know that if they approach too near Him, they will perish utterly. This power is also perceived in some religions as the power sustaining the cosmic order, in some as the source of social morality. And the human response to this encounter is one of ritual, by which men adore and even share in the absolute mystery through cults which sanctify special places, seasons, natural occurrences, objects, or gestures. Only at a later stage, sometimes very soon, sometimes never, does *homo religiosus* proceed to rationalize these experiences in a system of dogma, or to moralize them in a distinct ethical code.

The need to understand this aspect of human experience should be clear in an education which proposes to equip man with an understanding of his heritage, his potential, and his destiny.For the power of the religious impulse both to good and to evil, the depth of religious reflection, the richness of religious ritual, the shaping influence of religious forces to acts of consummate charity as well as to acts of bleakest violence — this power has not been a random but a dominating aspect in the human enterprise, whether we consider the primitive or the sophisticated branches of the family of man. And if one object that the strength of this influence has waned in the West since the eighteenth century — that is, when the educated classes turned skeptical and the working classes turned secular and established religion began to lose its public status — if one should raise such an objection to the inclusion of religious study in a university curriculum, then perhaps he should reflect further.

Religion still holds sway over a vast number of human lives. More crucially, the so-called secular man is a distinct minority in the human community, if we tally up its participants from all epochs and cultures. And as Eliade is fond of demonstrating, "non-religious man *in the pure state* is a comparatively rare phenomenon. (Even) the irreligious (person) still behaves religiously, even though (he is) not aware of the fact . . . and still retains a large stock of camouflaged myths and degenerate rituals."

For all the pathos and grandeur of secular man, it is especially the secular man who must come to see religion on its own terms if he is to sense the fullness of humanity, *and if he is to define the secular enterprise precisely in terms of its secularity*. Thus, the first task of religious study and theology is to classify religious phenomena and to describe their specific developments. And indeed, since the first university chair of History of Religions was established at Geneva in 1873, followed by the foundation of the first scholarly journal in this field at Paris in 1880, the study of religion has developed apace and flourished.

IT SHOULD BE clear from this rough sketch that religious study involves more than theology in the strict sense. In *The Idea of a University,* Cardinal Newman defined theology as "the science of God or the truths we know about God put into a system." While I would agree with Newman on the need for such study, it seems insufficient for the purposes of a truly liberal education. For it conveys a notion of theological and religious studies as a series of propositions, and makes religion seem like a matter of intellectual assent. But as my sketch



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suggests, religion and faith are rarely matters of formal proposition.

The sources of revelation claimed by the major religious systems of the West indicate that knowledge of God is embodied in legal and literary texts, in military and erotic poetry, in the development of institutions, in the observance of cults, and in the lives of certain venerable individuals. Thus, religious and theological study is far from a propositional matter, as the too-often-cited model of dogmatic theology misleads us to think. As the sources of revelation indicate, such study is highly differentiated and calls for various approaches. The first task of religious study, then, would be the comparison of religions which allows them to be classified and analyzed according to their own inherent properties. Although such study can remain on the level of a facile relativism, it can also prepare the student to appreciate the specific character of a given religious system and thus, if he choose, to grasp even more deeply the unique significance of his own tradition.

At this point, we can begin to assess the differences and relations between religious studies and the liberal arts. For unless religion is treated on its own terms, the other disciplines will be burdened with material they are not in a position to interpret. To take a simple example, the average secular historian will be ill able to grasp such phenomena as the Crusades or the Jansenist movement without some preparation in religious study. Try as he might to use sociological or psychological explanations, there will always be too much left over to explain.

All too often, of course, the other disciplines are not so much burdened by religious questions as they are tempted by them — tempted to pretend that these matters require no special understanding, tempted to exaggerate the claims of their own pet methods and pet hypotheses, tempted at last to deny any legitimacy to religious and theological claims in the sphere of disciplined intellectual research. We all know some sociological theory which claims that religious communities are really a matter of social control systems; or we have heard some psychologist explain all religious behavior in terms of one or another of the psychological theories which go in and out of fashion. The fault of these approaches is not their desire to understand religion with the help of the humane or the social sciences. The fault is that instead of explaining religion, they try to explain it away. They treat it as something which is really something else, and thus they patronize or even belittle the religious people they study.

Let me take an example from a different but related field, that of aesthetics. Anyone who listens to a lot of symphonies written between 1750 and 1900 will notice a terrific amount of development going on. The sociologist who surveys this can point out that musical entertainment was moving from small salons of the aristocracy to large concert halls of the rising bourgeoisie, which explains the larger orchestras and the longer playing times. A psychologist who studies tortured composers like Beethoven or Schumann or Mahler can also tell us a lot about the kind of expression their anguish found in music. But only the musicologist can tell us about music as music: about different uses of harmony, theories about the sound of woodwinds and brass, the development of sonata form, and so forth. It is the same in religious study. I have read economists on the peasant wars in the Reformation and psychologists on Luther's potty training; but none of that explains to me what religion in the sixteenth century was about, what it felt like, and how it worked.

In fact, when other disciplines do advance such explanations of religion, they end up assuming one or another theory of religion implicitly, or taking one or another model of spirituality and theology without being aware they are doing so. For, as Newman pointed out, when the specific tasks of theology are not openly recognized, that does not mean that theological statements are not being made. Instead, they are being made, but made irresponsibly, imprecisely, or superficially.

I do not, however, want to dwell on divisions. As I indicated at the outset, and as my description of religion suggests, the materials involved in religious study invite analysis and collaboration by all the arts and sciences. It would be a great mistake to think that theology could accomplish its tasks in splendid isolation. For theology would have died a death of attrition had it not been stimulated — even profoundly challenged — by several other sciences down the centuries. Only through the perfection of historical methods, accomplished more or less independently by historians, has it been possible to refine our sense of Scripture. But once helped by historians, theologians in turn have been able to instruct historians in the limits of factual material in a theological or philosophical argument.

Similarly, theology would have been much poorer if Abelard had not taken seriously the internal structures of logic; if Lorenzo Valla had not drawn the consequences of philological analysis; if Galileo hadn't pursued his astronomy; or if Darwin hadn't described his findings in genetic biology. Theology, I maintain, would be much worse off even though its less perceptive exponents at that time hounded each of the above men into clarifications or apologies which today embarrass the most orthodox believer.

GIVEN THE painful association of the examples I have just cited, I must emphasize that theology's need for the contribution of the other disciplines is not a superficial or a cosmetic one. One of the enduring struggles of theology as theology, as least in the Christian tradition, has been to define the limits of its own competence and the nature of its relation to the other sciences. This is perhaps the central question of contemporary theological debate, the question, that is, of theological method. But it was this same concern, *mutatis mutandis*, which marked the debates between Erasmus and Luther, which set Abelard and Bernard at odds, and which haunted the dreams of Jerome. Especially in the Christian fathers, in Augustine, Tertullian, and Origen, this question about religious study and other studies becomes part of the larger drama of religion and the larger cultural milieu on which it draws and to which it contributes.

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This need on the part of religious studies for the methods and materials of the other disciplines raises the question of what religious studies in turn can contribute to the other disciplines. For brevity, I shall take it for granted that the other disciplines look for expert opinion when they need it to interpret religious data. I would expect, for example, any political scientist attempting to figure out the situation in Iran not to issue some blanket generalization about religious sects being fanatic and not to assume that Northern Ireland, Jonestown, and Iran can all be lumped together. I would expect our hypothetical political scientist to find out what the Moslem religion says about aggression and passive resistance, what it preaches on social progress, material prosperity, the roles of the sexes, the function of prophets and kings, the nature of true happiness.

Beyond these matters of simple professional competence, I would argue that religious study makes a larger contribution. It conveys not information, but attitudes essential to leading the good life whether one is religious or not. Religious studies can embody and convey those attitudes uniquely, by virtue of their specific material. These are, among others I might mention, primarily the attitudes of mystery, of faith, and of symbolic expression.

Take mystery. Other disciplines may awaken an awe in students. The one college course which most opened me to quiet wonder at the mystery of things was a required science course in the theory of genetics. But only religious study concerns mystery as such: the ineluctable truth that experience and reality always exceed what we can say or think or do about them.

Take faith. Religious study as such must constantly remind the other disciplines that our thought and our action are not entirely the result of secure scientific proof but require a decision, in other words that facts and values cannot be separated. And decision, the act of personal choice, oriented toward the future, always involves the willingness to put oneself in jeopardy. No matter how great the security of our science or the safety of the institutions we take for granted, they hold sway over us only so long as we hold faith in them. Thus every step is a step into the void, guaranteed ultimately not by serene certainties but by our faith in the face of ambiguity and doubt. In his anguished search for certainty, the religious genius Pascal could only call the mathematical certainties of his fellow philosopher Descartes "useless and uncertain." The heart, he insisted, has reasons which reason does not know.

Finally, take the symbolic dimension. Here religious study joins with literature and the arts in demonstrating the symbolic nature of expression, the fact that we can only express a fragment of the truth we perceive, and that we must always reach beyond words to gesture, ritual, rhythm, and color to suggest in part what we can never speak as a whole. With mere language, as Eliot reminds us, we are

> Trying to learn to use words and every attempt
> Is a wholly new start, and a different kind of failure
> Because one has only learnt to get the better of words
> For the things one no longer has to say, or the way
> In which one is no longer disposed to say it.
> And so each venture is a new beginning, a raid on the inarticulate,
> With shabby equipment always deteriorating
> In the general mess of the imprecision of feeling
> Undisciplined squads of emotion.

WHILE I HAVE sketched out the way in which the material of religious studies sets up an interdependence between them and the liberal arts, I would like to touch on another way in which they are qualitatively different. This difference arises from a way employed by some in reflecting on questions of religion, a way not shared by the other disciplines, and a way which they often regard with misgiving, abhorrence, or even amusement. I am referring, of course, to the way of faith.

Until this point, I have used the terms "religious study" and "theology" interchangeably. But they are not identical. For theology cannot be a disinterested survey of religious phenomena. Theology is the reflection upon questions from a position of some personal religious conviction, or at least on the basis of a specific religious tradition taken as normative. In short, the difference between religious studies and theology is the difference between the pure life of the mind and *fides quaerens intellectum*.

But the question of faith should not be made more complex or mystifying than it deserves. There is some form of faith manifest in almost every human activity, in the love of a friend, the choice of a spouse, the loyalty to a nation or a political party or a candidate for public office. The act of *religious* faith, as a response to the goodness or the beauty or the saving power of God, should not seem so unusual, even if the object of religious faith is by definition a mystery. For while faith is not an act of reason, it is not thereby unreasonable. This is where theology comes in, for theology is the attempt to reason precisely about faith, to examine its content, and to draw out its implications by the use of reason. Religious experience and religious expression of their very nature raise questions which only reason can treat. Within the ecstasies and prayers and rituals of the faithful, there are rational elements and it is the proper task of theology to develop and explicate those elements.

Let us take a simple example. At the moment of Jesus's death, as the sky darkened, the earth quaked, and the graves of the dead burst open, a simple Roman centurion with little religious education suddenly perceived a supernatural significance to the moment and cried out, "This truly was a Son of God!" Now such a perception, such a declaration creates joy, trepidation, anxiety, consolation — and it also creates a lot of intellectual curiosity. This statement, although filled with religious significance, was not yet theological. But it contained the seeds of a powerful theological development, for it raised such questions as, does the Son of God mean the same as God? Does it mean that this crucified man shares the nature of God? Was he even a man at all, or a god in human form or a man who turned into God? These are questions of active human reason, and it took the Fathers of the church, schooled in all the subtleties of antique philosophy, four centuries to come to a

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definition on these matters. Their definition, pronounced in 451 at the Council of Chalcedon, was a masterpiece of theological reasoning as they proclaimed that Jesus Christ was the same perfect in Godhead and the same perfect in

> humanity, true God and true man, the same of a rational soul and body, consubstantial with the Father according to his Godhead, consubstantial with us according to his humanity . . . one and the same Christ, Son, and Lord, only begotten, in two natures unconfusedly, immutably, indivisibly, inseparably . . .

Not a phrase, not a word of this definition can be understood without reference to the philosophy of the time, and the rationalizing attempts to wrestle with the implications of that simple utterance of the earliest Christians, "Truly this was a Son of God."

Perhaps it is this task of mediation between faith and reason which makes theology such an unloved stepchild. For all its efforts, it often ends up pleasing nobody. The devout faithful, swept aloft by the grandeur of the Psalms, will hardly find such sweetness in the subtleties of Paul Tillich or Karl Rahner; indeed, he will think that they prattle too much where reverent silence is due. On the other hand, the common-sense scientist or secular humanist regards the talk about "ground of being" or "transcendental horizon" as a poor substitute for measurable data or serious social action. But both these positions fail to appreciate the distinctive nature of theology.

The faithful who consider theology an impious rationalism miss theology's responsibility to explicate the faith. And the rationalist fails to perceive the theologian's task to criticize the faith. Just as one with natural musical gifts uses advanced musical training to criticize music, so does the theologian function, in the words of H. Richard Niebuhr, as a critic of faith. Without reason, he cannot begin to raise or solve these questions. But without faith, he cannot, in Niebuhr's words, "distinguish between the high and the low (points in the life of faith), between genuine and spurious experiences and expressions, between symbol and meaning." And it is this dual function of theology which finally separates it from the rest of the arts and sciences. Some hail this as hypostasis; some scorn it as schizophrenia. But theology cannot shake loose of reason without becoming mysticism or fanaticism; nor can it fight free of faith without becoming, in Max Weber's phrase, "religiously tone-deaf."

Niebuhr describes the central difference between theology and the other sciences when he insists that

> As an effort of disciplined thinking in this context, (theology) cannot easily be classified under one of the current great categories of human inquiry: as a science, or as one of the humanities, or as history, or as *Geisteswissenschaft*, or as a critique or a philosophy. It must develop its own methods in view of the situation in which it works and of the object with which it deals, without becoming the vassal of methodologies developed by rational inquiries directed toward other objects . . . neither queen nor vassal among such inquiries, (theology) must pursue its own way in service of the God of faith and His servants.

But he also reminds us of the fructifying dialogue between theology and all the other disciplines when he adds,

> The way of theology though an independent one, cannot be the way of isolation, unless the theology in question be concerned with some constricted divisive faith, directed toward a little god . . . one among many objects of human devotion rather than with the faith that is directed toward the One . . .

I THINK, HOWEVER, that the deepest suspicion against theologians in the academic community is not against faith, but against the authority which claims control over their work and to which they, at one point or another, must be willing to submit their judgment. Of course, other sciences have authorities and orthodoxies of their own, many of them tyrannical and intransigent. But in those cases, at least in principle, authority must base itself on the principles of reason or tests of verification.

As long as authority in the arts and the sciences is in principle susceptible of reasoned correction, there can be no question of scandal on intellectual grounds. When a Marxist political scientist or a feminist literary critic lose their academic position, it is a moral scandal, not an intellectual one. That is, the authorities who thwart them can be charged with moral failure to live up to principles of intellectual freedom to which they are accountable and which they must acknowledge. But when the Missouri synod of the Lutheran church or the Vatican Congregation of Doctrine dismiss theologians, it is for many an *intellectual* scandal precisely speaking because the bodies in question do not hold themselves accountable to the same principles of free inquiry.

I cannot hope to offer any solution to such an intricate matter. For one thing, differing religious traditions define and exercise their authority so differently that generalizations are practically useless. Perhaps a few observations may offer us food for discussion. First, inasmuch as a theologian is responsible to a community of faith, he is, like it or not, responsible to that community and, for good or for ill, to its authorities. Second, the role of that authority is itself a difficult one. As obtuse as religious authorities may appear from time to time, it can involve considerable anguish both to guarantee the freedom of theological opinion and also to guard the integrity of a received tradition of faith, an anguish I think very visible if one looks at the life of Pope Paul VI, and an anguish which we in the academy tend to overlook. But as long as such authorities remain open to reasoned argument, their role can be a fruitful and supportive one. Finally, what about the authority which embarrasses and scandalizes by its impervious or arrogant attitude? What about the Galileos, the Giordano Brunos, the

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Spinozas, the Henri de Lubacs — not to mention the very founders of the colony of Rhode Island and the Providence Plantations, Anne Hutchinson, Roger Williams, and Samuel Gerton.

I think that these painful episodes hold one comforting lesson: wherever religious authority has violated others' rights or exceeded its own competence, it has hurt itself badly. When religion has tried to undo the rights of others, it has ended up working its own undoing. When religious authority refuses to listen to other competent authority, the verdict of history has been to go and do likewise to religion. The ridicule and indifference paid to such authority is often only the reflection of its own behavior.

SO FAR, I have dealt with academic concerns. But I would be untrue to my deepest commitment as an educator were I not to conclude with a simple but forcible human consideration, not merely on the role of religious studies, but on the vital need for them if an education is to train and to bring to maturity the powers of discernment, analysis, and judgment. Here, I think, we do students a grave injustice to leave off their religious education as we do with the level attained at the age of twelve. If we did this in any other field, our folly would at once be put to rightful scorn. What person can consider himself educated if he learns his last bit of scientific information at the age of twelve? What person could free himself from his own prejudices and engage in mature discourse if the last he read in literature or history or political science or mathematics or psychology were read in the eighth grade?

It is no wonder so many people give up on religion. They give up on religion in the same way they give up on hopscotch and Mother Goose and necking behind the barn. But this does not mean, I hope, that they give up on play and poetry and the quest of love. Indeed, they should give up religion if all they have is the religion they had before they had hardly reached puberty. And when skeptics mock at religious belief, or more often just yawn, they are usually only mocking at some caricature they dreamed up in college — in other words, exactly at the age when they were ready for a deeper grasp of the complexity of the Bible, the insecurity of the faith commitment, and the marvelous rigor of religious study. We fill them with good things in so much else, but in this crucial area, we send them empty away.

Finally, to conclude with a word not on the general student, but on the student who, like the musically gifted or the mathematically gifted, has some personal instinct in religion: I think we have today a kind of student who has deep personal enthusiasm but little sense of mooring in the history and teachings of his denomination, and thus is ill prepared to outlive the stimulation of a recent conversion experience and the brief glow of fervor. As compared with students ten or fifteen years ago, religiously oriented students today are more spontaneously active in social service, both in their free time and in their life goals. And so they are less restless when they sit down to an examination of the intellectual problems of religion — less informed perhaps, but also less feisty.

If my hunch is right, this is a sign of that openness of mind in students which is a condition of any learning, and which, if it is there at the outset, considerably eases the teacher's task. When this is stifled by prejudice, whether hostile or favorable, or worse yet by apathy, it is the teacher's first office to call forth that openness which guarantees the liberality of the liberal arts.

Religious study, then, like the other forms of discourse, introduces students to a certain kind of knowledge and gives them a further measure of wisdom. If we are successful in the ultimate goal of that study, then we will also provide the students with a wisdom which can ultimately render them, like the disciples returning from Emmaus, or like the shipwrecked travelers arriving in this "brave new world" at the end of *The Tempest*, or like the students in a colloquy of Erasmus, either speechless before the mystery of this wisdom, or eloquent in its praise.

Marie Ponsot

Defusing the Usual Criminal Metaphors

Pity the idle who (though daily our lives
must make room for those who use clubs guns knives)
speak as if a penis were, when erect,
a tower of hard. The dear part we inspect
is always quick to shrink from violence;
hand-small, it fits any woman well.
Jocktalk of huge dongs grown trenchant as they swell
stands in, to hide the messy evidence
of our true brute force; it is greed, not sex,
that we secrete to feed, till it infects
the whole life, not the part, with rape-like impotence.

The part comes on hopeful, nudging, nuzzling, tip
bent damp and rosy toward a soft eclipse.
Here's no jackhammer jammed home ruthlessly
but the yielding press of stamen under bee,
glowing at the sweetness of us; neatly met
and heedful (clumsy) as we sweat;
here's no plow, ramrod, sword; no piercing cut;
if root, tender, a root-bud, just unshut;
though worm a word of yes and asking blessing,
though hole a blessing asking mouth of yes,
as one soft-tissued muscle noses plumply through
other muscles, their lax loop drawn. Here, we two
make touch our second sight as, no longer blind,
we each bring a self—big bones, guts, thoughts, hearts—
to local focus, trusting the ease we find
in discovery of our nervous secret parts

(as if hot trust might disinfect our minds
and its oils ease the human kind in us
to be in public as in private generous
with exchanges larger than the ease we're thinking of;
as if what we have to make in making love is love.)

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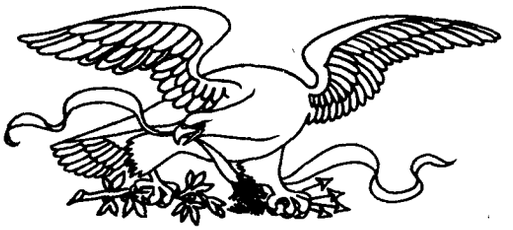
THE COURT DEFENDS EQUAL ACCESS



Religious liberty on campus

ROY E. YOUNG

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY often receives little support on college and university campuses. That is why the recent U.S. Supreme Court case, *Widmar et al* v. *Vincent et al*, decided in December 1981, is so important. Eight Supreme Court justices advanced the constitutional principles of the free exercise of religion and freedom of speech. Their ruling should help end the religious discrimination currently practiced in many institutions of higher education.

The case involved the University of Missouri at Kansas City, a state university. UMKC routinely permitted the one-hundred-plus officially recognized student groups to use its facilities for meetings. An exception was official religious groups. These organizations were prohibited the use of university buildings or grounds "for purposes of religious worship or religious teachings."

This prohibition, argued the university, was necessary to maintain "strict separation of church and state." The establishment clause of the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment required that religious groups be prevented from using the campus facilities. Otherwise, the State of Missouri would be giving "support to an institution of religion." So the argument ran.

Eleven students, members of a registered group, Cornerstone, "sought access to the facilities for the purpose of offering prayer, singing hymns, reading scripture, and teaching biblical principles." Worship, the group admitted, was "an important part of the general atmosphere" of its meetings.

Refused permission to conduct their meetings in university buildings, the Cornerstone members "alleged that the university's discrimination against religious activity and discussion violated their rights to free exercise of religion, equal protection, and freedom of speech under the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments" of the U.S. Constitution. Eight justices (Burger, Brennan, Marshall, Blackmun, Stevens, Rehnquist, O'Connor, Powell) agreed.

Powell's majority opinion noted that UMKC's stated policy was the encouragement of "the activities of student organizations." Past Court decisions "leave no doubt that the First Amendment rights of speech and association extend to the campuses of state universities." Any "exclusion from a public forum based on the religious content of a group's intended speech" requires the university to show that "its regulation is necessary to serve a compelling state interest, and the regulation must be narrowly drawn to achieve the end."

In this instance, UMKC opened its facilities for use by student groups. Engaging in religious worship and discussion, according to the Court, "are forms of speech and association protected by the First Amendment." The question was whether the university could "exclude groups because of the content of their speech." An exclusion "must therefore justify the standard of review appropriate to content-based exclusion."

Letting a religious group use university facilities would "not offend the establishment clause" if a three-pronged test were met. This test was formulated in the 1971 *Lemon* v. *Kurtzman* case. "First, the (governmental) policy must have a secular legislative purpose; second, its principal or primary effect must be one that neither advances nor inhibits religion . . .; finally, the (policy) must not foster 'an excessive government entanglement with religion.' "

The Court majority said that "An open forum policy, including non-discrimination against religious speech," has a secular purpose and avoids entanglement with religion. "The college classroom with its surrounding environs is peculiarly 'the marketplace of ideas.' " It is a place where many viewpoints, religious and non-religious, can be discussed. "If school facilities may be used to discuss anti-clerical doctrine," stated Justice Stevens in a concurring opinion, ". . . comparable use by a group desiring to express a belief in God must also be permitted. The fact that their expression of faith includes ceremonial conduct is not . . . a sufficient reason for suppressing their discussion entirely."

An equal access policy risks less entanglement than a university policy that excludes religious worship and religious speech. Under an exclusion policy, the university must "determine which words and activities fall within religious worship and religious teachings." There would be a "continuing need to monitor group meetings to ensure compliance with the rule." Here is much greater entanglement than a policy that lets *all* official student groups use university facilities.

Does allowing religious groups to share the public forum "have the primary effect of advancing religion"? Obviously religious groups benefit from access to university facilities.

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But the Court majority found any religious benefits to be incidental.

An open forum for all groups "does not confer any imprimatur of State approval on religious sects or practices." Students for a Democratic Society and the Young Socialist Alliance can use university buildings. In no way does that commit the university to the goals espoused by these groups. Similarly, the advancement of religion would not be the "primary effect" of offering facilities to religious groups on the terms available to other organizations. "The 'primary effect' of such a policy would not be to advance religion, but rather to further the neutral purpose of developing students' 'social and cultural awareness as well as (their) intellectual curiosity.' "

Without this decision, university facilities would be available to groups for anti-religious speeches and practices while being prohibited to those who participate in pro-religious activities. This is recognized by the Court majority. Their opinion promotes religious liberty by opening university facilities "to groups and speeches of all kinds," subject to the establishment of reasonable time, place, and manner regulations. It should be received with great enthusiasm by those persons who favor religious freedom.

BABCIA

AN EASTER RECOLLECTION

PETER SKARGA

BABCIA was a simple woman. She was born a peasant and she would die a peasant. She had married grandpa late in life, after grandpa had lived wifeless for some years. I remember her wedding. She had a special cake for the children. She loved children with the ache of a woman who had never had any of her own.

When she was a young girl, early teens, a rich Jewish doctor and his wife from America returned to their town in Poland and took her back to America as a servant. They were good to her. Then she married and lived in Brooklyn. Her husband died. She married grandpa.

She took care of grandpa lovingly, tenderly at first, until his cruelty and brutality wore her smile off her face, and she would quietly put the plate of soup down in front of him and turn around to wipe the tears from her eyes with her immaculate apron. It would be easy to say grandpa had been brutalized by immigrant life. His cruelty was deep, deep in his black eyes. Maybe it went back all the way to Cain.

The harder it was to live with grandpa, the more she lavished her affections on his children and grandchildren. They were all the family she had, and they were hers. She would give you a glass of tea, and then unable to control herself, grab you from behind and smother your neck and head with kisses, tears falling on your hair while she prayed God would bless you.

Once she had a heart attack. It was unbelievable; she was stronger, more robust than anyone I knew. Every Sunday she would walk ten miles, across the Kosciuszko Bridge, to visit the cemetery in Queens. That was her way to get to the country.

PETER SKARGA *is a pseudonym.*

She recovered from her heart attack in time to visit her grandchildren in distant New Jersey, riding by bus, climbing through a window when they weren't yet home from shopping, and then, as if to prove to all the world that nothing would get her down, grabbing the shovel and mixing cement while the men were taking a break.

Nothing seemed to get her down for long. She seemed oblivious to the ugliness of her surroundings. She called the burning oil refinery her "Christmas Tree," lighting up the night with its ominous flame. She must have washed the windows in the house every day, because they were always sparkling.

Then grandpa died. I remember walking into the kitchen, which was also the bathroom, as it housed the bathtub, and the dining room. I found her just sitting in a chair, her blue print dress, her apron, her stiff kerchief across her unwrinkled head. She was clutching her handkerchief, patient, quiet, crying, resigned, somehow sad that the monster she had lived with and served had died. Perhaps she was afraid that with him gone, no one would visit her.

She was right.

It was hard to go back from the suburbs. The only ones left were the retarded cousin, the alcoholic uncle, all stories of sadness left behind in the move to the bright world. No one went back. It was as far from New Jersey as from California, and her beloved family was scattered that far.

I myself hadn't been back in years. Of course, I had been too far to visit for most of that time, too busy with other things t rest of the time.

My parents and I had no desire to visit that Easter r It was a strained Holy Week. With my parents attending the new liturgies at the suburban ch straw came when the Holy Saturday midnigh

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eight, the Easter Vigil over at ten. The liturgy was wordy, the people vaguely hungry for something they weren't getting, so many ideas, explanations of everything. "We do this because it means this, that because it means that." If you have to explain a symbol it's not a symbol.

Still, we were determined to have the post-Vigil feast. We ate and we drank, and we drank more than we should have, well into the morning, a fragment of a large family huddling in a suburban house, drinking for something missing. The idea to go to dawn Mass in Brooklyn came to us then, back to an old Polish church where my parents had been married, a different neighborhood from Babcia's.

For three hours we slept, and rose at five to drive through the tunnel, through the Midtown, into the sleek, black, rainy streets of Brooklyn, block after block, mile after mile of despair and ruin. The crocuses and daffodils of suburbia were mostly plastic here. It was eerie the way the ghetto can be in a rainy pre-dawn blackness. It was all like a strange dream.

I was uncomfortable in the church. It was naive, small, filled with statues, loaded with pots of lilacs. The priest came out of the sacristy. Oh God, I thought, a small foreigner, what will this be like?

The church was full of old people, mostly women, of every shape and size. They were all Polish, the old women who had been left behind when their children moved out to the Island or to Jersey or even further into the distant reaches of America. They huddled in tiny apartments, living in terror, amidst the boarded-up shops, the burned-out houses.

They began the procession. The silk canopy, the priest with glowing gold monstrance, incense burning, and the procession of the old women. It was unlike anything I had ever seen before. Old women with stockings like potato sacks, old women with ancient feet-bearing furs, old women with blue hats and white pearled pins, old women with shopping bags, all joined the procession, limping, ancient, stooped, following the monstrance, the priest around the church. The lame, the halt, the blind were seeing with faith, led forward in a march of faith. That was what was missing, this was what I had not seen, no, not in Hawaii, nor in Stockholm, not at Harvard nor any suburban mall — faith, simple, burning, abiding faith. And with faith, devotion.

The priest gave the sermon. The high baroque altar behind him became a wall of burning gold, his mouth the only opening, a holy opening, in an iconostasis. The holy word of God was being spoken here. The word was speaking, not being spoken about, not analyzed, just spoken. It was bread for the hungry.

We left the church dazed. An old parishioner took his umbrella out of his baby carriage and returned to the streets.

We drove off.

Suddenly, melted, reminded, we decided to stop in on Babcia.

We rang the front doorbell of the three-story frame building. Way down, through two lace curtained doors, her face peeped out. She rang the opening buzzer. We walked down to her kitchen.

She stood up against the window as if she had just seen a vision. She began jumping up and down, up and down, saying:

"Oh, thank God, thank God, I'm so happy, I'm so happy, thank God, thank God."

She excused herself and cried for a minute, just shaking her head, and then took our coats.

On the table was an Easter hyacinth and a full spread of kielbasa, eggs, ham, rye bread, babka. She had prepared the entire Easter feast, and set it out, knowing that no one would come, perhaps that no one cared, but she cared, and she was the grandmother of the family, blood or no blood, and if we all disappeared into America, she would still be there with food and the painting of our Lady of Czestochowa weeping with her.

We were overcome with joy.

I sat looking out her window, staring at a line of colorful clothes some neighbor had out that blustery morning. She asked:

"What makes you so pleased out there?"

"I see beauty in the line of clothes."

"Oh," she said, "I guess I can understand that." And she told us about the most beautiful thing she knew in this world. It was a tree which grew somewhere between her house and the dock where she had first gotten off the boat here sixty years before. It had been spring, and the tree was in bloom. Somehow every year, in the spring, she had managed to get back to her tree, even if she had to walk there. It was like a child. she said, the only thing she had in America, but thank God, she had something. Then she added her favorite saying — *"Czem hata, to bogata"* — "If you've got a roof, you're rich."

We stayed for hours, and decided that she should move out to the suburbs, to be with us. She was overjoyed. A miracle had happened to her that day.

As we left, she blessed us and said, "Your family has always been very good to me. I am eternally grateful."

A month later she was dead.

Every tree on the way to the cemetery in Queens was beautiful.

"Oh, my people. . . ."

Screen

INNOCENCE ABROAD

COSTA-GAVRAS'S 'MISSING'

UNLIKE THE CHARACTERS in *Circle of Deceit*, which I was discussing in my last column, those in Costa-Gavras's *Missing* are not alienated, existential types. They are an altogether less sophisticated group, and more satisfying. Like *Circle*, *Missing* is set in a third-world country caught in the midst of political upheaval. Unlike *Circle*, this film doesn't use the suffering and the terror as a mere backdrop, a

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set before which its heroes can strut their emotions, or lack thereof. *Missing* is more concerned with the human facts it reveals. It is based on fact, on a true story of some Americans trapped in Pinochet's *coup* against Allende in Chile. (The country is never actually named, but the references to it are unmistakable.) The only fact that concerns Ed Horman (Jack Lemmon) when he first arrives in the capital city is that his son has vanished during the *coup*. Ed is a little skeptical even of this fact, for he suspects that his son, Charles (John Shea), whose politics he dislikes, invited trouble. The story the film tells is the mystery of Charlie's disappearance. The film is over when that mystery is solved. Yet *Missing* isn't really Charlie's story. It's Ed's.

If it weren't for some flashbacks, Charlie wouldn't have much of a role in the film after the first quarter of an hour. And even in them, Ed dominates what we see. Despite the fact that the flashbacks are the one place where the film still seems to be about Charlie, they are where Costa-Gavras gets closest to Ed. Ed is not a very sympathetic character, so Costa-Gavras needs a way to disarm our hostility toward him, to make us feel what he is going through. The film accomplishes this by filtering these crucial flashbacks, where Charlie's wife Beth (Sissy Spacek) and various others fill Ed in, through Ed's own consciousness. If we couldn't see events Ed's way like this, we wouldn't feel the impact that they ultimately have on him.

The subtlety of how Costa-Gavras deals with Ed, and with us, is apparent at the point when several people who witnessed Charlie's arrest by the military report what they saw. Some say there were two carloads of soldiers. Some say there was only one. Some say Charlie was taken away in a jeep. Another says he was made to stand up in the back of a small truck. As each version is repeated, Charlie is pulled from the house in which he and Beth live. A soldier gratuitously kicks Charlie's pet duck out of the yard. And all the details shift and switch around before our eyes. The number and disposition of the soldiers changes, the jeep is transmogrified into the little truck, etc.

The effect of these variations, as the duck goes flying over the fence in each one, is to give Charlie's arrest a certain ludicrousness. It takes on the qualities of a comic opera, which only confirms what Ed already thinks and makes him scoff at the witnesses. We get right inside his paranoia. Ed seizes on the inconsistencies as if they somehow invalidated the whole episode. Yet the fact is that no matter how the details of Charlie's arrest jump around, he *is* being dragged from his house in handcuffs every time. The repetitions that make the incident seem comical give it an increasing gravity as well. Within all the silly fluctuations, the ineradicable fact remains, and grows ever more enormous. In being arrested again and again, Charlie begins to represent the thousands of others we have seen being rounded up. The ubiquity and redundancy of the process of arrest in a police state comes through, even to Ed. The evidence drives him toward the truth as inexorably as the prisoner is driven forward by the rifle butt of the soldier.

Ed's persistence eventually brings him and Beth to a vast, chilly underground warehouse in which hundreds and hundreds, perhaps thousands, of embalmed bodies have been stored awaiting identification. In the endless corridors and chambers where the dead have been stacked like cordwood, though they don't find Charlie, Beth does happen upon one of their friends, also missing since the *coup*. Ed has tried from the beginning to ignore everything happening around him in order to concentrate on Charlie; but as he has gradually gained access to places like this morgue, or to the huge sports stadium that now serves as a concentration camp, it has become harder and harder for him to remain unaffected. That the movie is his political education is what gives it its power. It forces us to learn again, painfully, what we had already known and forgotten.

I haven't read the Thomas Hauser book that Costa-Gavras has, in collaboration with screenwriter Donald Stewart, adapted for his film. I'm not sure whether the book concentrates on Ed as exclusively as the movie does. Wherever this emphasis came from, it is the master stroke here. It makes the political truths with which *Missing* deals into something purely personal that can be conveyed by action — by the flawless performances that both Lemmon and Spacek give. What Ed learns is not only that the fascist brutality of the *coup* is inextricably mixed up in Charlie's disappearance, but that America is mixed up in the *coup*. The latter is the truth that Charlie stumbled on by accident, by being in the wrong place at the wrong time, and that cost him his life. This Ed has to accept in the end. Our problem — the one that we in the audience have — is that we do know the things this movie is telling us. They are so palpably, undeniably true that we are numb with them. We are inured to them. By telling us the story

of a man who doesn't care about such truths, who has to learn them for himself, *Missing* finds a way to revive our own feelings about them.

At the end of the film, as Ed and Beth are leaving to come home to America, Ed threatens to sue the State Depart- representatives who've deceived him all along. When one of them says coolly that that's his "privilege," Ed corrects the man. It's "my right," he says, and gives this guy a little lesson in civics. Ed sounds almost like Malcolm X here, naively threatening to bring the chickens home to roost. The lawsuit that the real Ed Horman did bring cost him a fortune, and got him nowhere. At least in *Missing*, perhaps, Ed finally does succeed in bringing some home truths home. In the closing shot of the film, he at last manages to get back the body of his dead son.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

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Books: CATHOLICS & AMERICANIZATION

AMERICAN CATHOLICS
A HISTORY OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC COMMUNITY IN THE UNITED STATES

James Hennesey, S.J.
Oxford, $19.95, 397 pp.

David J. O'Brien

FEW BOOKS on American Catholicism published in the last two decades have been more welcome than James Hennesey's new history of the church in the United States. For two decades the only good one-volume history has been John Tracy Ellis's *American Catholicism*, originally presented as the Walgreen Lectures at the University of Chicago in 1955 and published the following year. With a post-conciliar chapter added in 1969, the paperback edition continues to be widely used in courses and has been the only readily available response to the question asked by so many active Catholics: "What can I read that will give me a brief overview of the American Catholic experience?" John Cogley and Andrew Greeley prepared interesting short histories after Ellis's appeared, but both were skewed by their authors' distinctive experience and concerns. Only Ellis provided the necessary information but increasingly his book was limited by the fact that it preceded a rapid expansion of research and publication on American Catholic themes, not only by traditional church historians but by scholars working in urban, immigrant, working-class, and intellectual history.

Now James Hennesey, well known for his excellent scholarly work on the nineteenth century American hierarchy, has provided us with a comprehensive, fact-filled short history, appropriately dedicated to Ellis, who has written an elegant Foreword. Hennesey's work has many of the qualities which distinguished that of his "teacher and friend": thorough research, incredible accuracy in dealing with thousands of names and dates, a gift for capturing the public personality of bishops, a determination to honestly set forth both the strengths and weaknesses of the church, in short, a blend of scholarly excellence, literary grace, and intellectual integrity. Ellis notes that the new book takes into account the recent development of social history "from the bottom up," noting the experiences of diverse ethnic groups and attempting, where the current research allows, to capture something of the experience of ordinary Catholics in their parishes and neighborhoods, all the while keeping the organizational focus on the institutional church. The book can still be classified as church history, and it is church history at its best.

At first glance, the critic may think that this book is too "academic," too filled with names and facts, too modest in its interpretations. Yet an author cannot do everything in one book. For Catholics suffering from historical amnesia and for Americans who never incorporated Catholics into the common national memory, an effort to lay out the facts, to tell the story in as much detail as possible, is both necessary and desirable. Moreover, there is a clear interpretive framework here, once again similar to that of Monsignor Ellis. The American church, after the somewhat exotic period of French and Spanish missions, really begins with the Maryland Catholics and the founding father, John Carroll. Integrated into the planter culture of the region and sharing many of its values, Carroll and his generation wanted a church thoroughly at home in America, Catholic in religion, American in its dedication to republican institutions, with active lay leadership and sharp limitations on Roman authority. Carroll's plans failed, overwhelmed by the immigrants who poured into the country between 1820 and 1920, giving the church a foreign tone and its people a sense of being outsiders. In the twentieth century, foreignness receded, replaced by an ecclesiastically-centered subculture at once aloof and self-righteous in its social life and cultural attitudes and thoroughly American in its political and economic practice. The immigrant church of the nineteenth century and the bishop-centered church of the twentieth each represented a form of Americanization, adaptation of traditional institutions and beliefs to new world conditions. The recent history, what Hennesey, quoting Gustave Weigel, calls "a revolutionary moment," represents the climax of that Americanization; the church is finally fully at home in America but Catholics still have that "special sense" derived from common faith and shared experience; it will be the foundation for new expressions of Catholic life in the future.

Like Ellis before him, Hennesey welcomes Americanization, but is conscious of its shortcomings; he values movements, apostolates, and missionary endeavors, but worries about belief, unity, and especially intelligence and theological coherence. This is a liberal Catholic interpretation, liberal in valuing truth, freedom, concern for social justice and political reponsibility, and open discussion of differences, but thoroughly Catholic in appreciating the institutional church, the links with other churches and Rome, continuity with the past, the heritage of Catholic culture, and the importance of clear ideas about faith: "the fundamental challenges facing American Catholics in 1981 are challenges rooted in theology." This interpretive framework is principled and modest; it remains the best one for telling the story of American Catholics as Catholics.

Hennesey calls his "a history," not "the history," of the American church. While it incorporates some of the information provided by the work of such historians as Jay Dolan, Philip Gleason, and William Halsey, it does not fully accommodate their interpretations. The Ellis/Hennesey survey, telling the story as national and fundamentally ecclesiastical, can not always explain why things happened the way they did. Parishes,

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schools, hospitals, movements, all just seem to appear, with the implication that they resulted from the energetic work of the bishops, priests, sisters (especially foundresses), and dedicated lay persons whose names fill the book. Ideas, too, derive mostly from Europe; why some seem to work and others don't is never very clear. Only an approach which examines the whole story from another angle, from the function that parishes and symbols serve in the lives of people, and the function that church institutions and symbols play in larger social structures, can begin to answer those questions. The new social historians have broken down Americanization into themes of urbanization, industrialization, and cultural adjustment in an effort to understand more explicitly the role played by religion in its widest sense in the American experience. Similarly, European historians under the heading "popular religion" are trying to get at the role of religion in the lives of people and local communities. When one considers how decentralized and mobile the United States was in the nineteenth century, and how parochial and/or ethnocentric the consciousness of most Catholics in the United States was and remains, the value and potential usefulness of such approaches seems obvious. The literature is not yet abundant enough to allow for a general social history of American Catholicism; even if it were, it would complement, not displace, the older forms of church history with their emphasis on institutions and major personalities. It would be foolhardy to think that Hennesey's *American Catholics* provides an adequate basis for pastoral planning in Peoria; it would be equally foolish to rewrite American Catholic history on the basis of Jay Dolan's work on antebellum parishes in New York City or Timothy Smith's marvelous essays on religion in the lives of new immigrants from Eastern Europe. Together, church history and social history might well enable American Catholics to understand their past in ways which will contribute to an intelligent response to the challenges facing them.

In the meantime, church history need not apologize to social history. Organization and leadership made a difference, and they still do. Father Hennesey has told the story exceptionally well; he has provided badly needed information and his excellent notes point to most of the best research. Those who read it will be grateful to Hennesey for writing that most unusual of books, one for which there is a real need. They will do well to take the next step, searching out additional work on the subject and encouraging Catholic scholars, and the academic communities on which they depend, to continue the badly needed work of researching our past. Well informed historical consciousness remains one of the most needed, and the most missing, elements in contemporary American Catholicism. Once the paperback edition of this rather expensive book is published, there will be no excuse for ignoring the American dimension of Catholicism in the United States.

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The churches' attempt to educate

CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Thomas H. Groome
Harper and Row, $12.95, 296 pp.

Thomas P. Walters

BLURBS are blatant attempts by publishers to seduce an already compromised person — the book buyer. For as Henry Ward Beecher noted, human nature is never so weak as in the bookstore. Judging from the blurbs surrounding its rather inauspicious title, one would conclude that *Christian Religious Education: Sharing One's Story and Vision* is *the* book on religious eduction. In fact, it is certainly one of the books.

Christian Religious Education by Thomas H. Groome, an Assistant Professor of Theology and Religious Education at Boston College, is a scholarly and systematic effort to deal with the foundational questions that underpin the various Christian churches' attempts to educate. The work draws heavily on the themes of liberation theology and stands as a welcome change in an era of moral majorities, moonies and irrational right-to-lifers and pro-abortionists.

The book consists of twelve chapters dealing with six foundational topics that are characterized by the interrogative pronouns — what, why, where, how, when, and who. The six foundational questions serve as the major divisions of the work and are entitled:

Part I, The Nature of Christian Religious Education (the What)

Part II, The Purpose of Christian Religious Education (the Why)

Part III, The Content of Christian Religious Education (the Where)

Part IV, An Approach to Christian Religious Education: Shared Praxis (a How)

Part V, Readiness for Christian Religious Education by shared Praxis (the When)

Part VI, The Copartners in Christian Religious Education (the Who).

In Part I, Groome systematically es-

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tablishes the nature of education to be a concern for the already, the present, and the future as well as concern for the political, i.e., the attempt to influence how people live their lives. Christian religious education, he maintains, is "a political activity with pilgrims in time that deliberately and intentionally attends with them to the activity of God in our present, to the Story of the Christian faith community, and to the vision of God's Kingdom . . ."

Part II, the Why, specifies the metapurpose of religious education as the leading out of people to the "Kingdom of God" in Jesus Christ. This is to be accomplished by enabling people to live lives of Christian faith and by promoting human freedom. In Chapter Three, Groome presents a comprehensive resumé of consensus statements from contemporary exegesis of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures concerning the "Kingdom of God." James Fowler's work on faith development is summarized in Chapter Four.

Part III centers on the context of Christian religious education. This section shows Groome, with one essential difference, to be in sympathy with the religious education theorists and practitioners who espouse the socialization model. The difference is Groome's emphasis on promoting "critical consciousness," i.e., the ability to think creatively and critically. Without this ability individuals are in danger of becoming creatures of their context rather than creators. This emphasis is a key contribution of the book.

Part IV outlines the author's approach to Christian religious education which he entitles "Shared Christian Praxis." Groome begins by highlighting the biblical understanding of to "Know the Lord" as a unity of love, obedience, and belief, which maintains the quality and mutuality of theory and practice. He establishes in Chapter Eight the philosophical roots for his praxis approach by tracing a history of "praxis epistemology" from Aristotle to Jürgen Habermas and Paulo Freire. In Chapter Nine the "Shared Christian Praxis" approach is described as a dialectical interpretive activity in which members of

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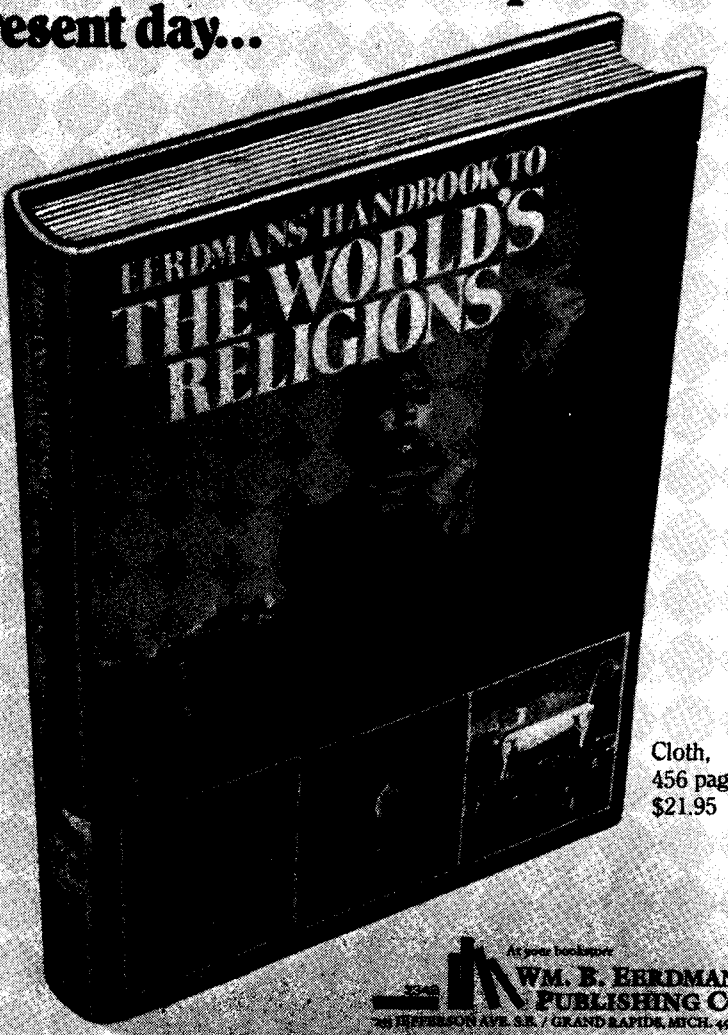

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the Christian community critically share their own respective stories (past) and visions (future) as well as the Christian community's Story and Vision. The dialogical exchange is comprised of five movements (Chapter Ten) which are designed to result in the mutual transformation of both the individual and the community.

Parts V and VI, dealing with readiness (When) and the participants (Who), while well done, especially the summary of Piaget's developmental theory (Chapter Eleven), add little to the book's central thesis.

Two things trouble me about the book. (1) I believe Groome fails to adequately reconstruct the term "religious education." There is a problem with any understanding of religious education that assumes that the question of God's existence is at any point resolved in the lives of the learners. In fact the religion teacher's task is to continually reformulate this question. If the answer is presumed and one begins to teach on the assumption that the learners are believers, one is into a different enterprise than that termed "religious education." It is one thing to operate out of a specific religious tradition and to use that tradition as the context and content of the educative interaction, but it is an entirely different matter to presume the participants have appropriated this context and content. If such an assumption is made one may be catechizing or proselytizing but not educating. (2) I would have liked Groome to speak more thoroughly to the issue of church membership which refers to the participants' understanding of religious norms, customs and convention (Elliot Turiel's conventional domain) and the development of religious faith which would appear from Fowler's research to transcend denominational regulations and consensus.

Having pointed out what I consider to be weaknesses, I applaud Thomas Groome's effort to provide an adequate, comprehensive theoretical base for "religious education." Not only will this book be useful for professional religious educators; it should at some time be on every seminarian's reading list.

Getting beneath the skin

THE WALDORF SCHOOL APPROACH TO HISTORY
Werner Glas
The Anthroposophic Press, $6.95, 102 pp.

Owen Barfield

IN THE April 4, 1981, number of *Commonweal* I had the privilege of reviewing M.C. Richards's book *Towards Wholeness: Rudolf Steiner Education in America*. It contains a chapter entitled "The Teacher," in the course of which the author observes, "In pondering Rudolf Steiner/Waldorf education in America for more than twenty years I have observed that it is the inner life of the teacher that gives the organism its uncommon energy and direction and humanity and substance and inspiration." It is by no means inappropriate therefore that a book should now have appeared actually written by a Waldorf schoolteacher of maturity and experience. Werner Glas is of course not concerned to parade his "inner life," or that of Waldorf teachers in general, before the eyes of his readers, or to justify any such notable claims made on their behalf; but by writing a careful account of one aspect of the teaching that goes on in these Rudolf Steiner schools he has, so to speak, laid their cards on the table for the kind of inspection such claims fairly invite.

One does not need, in order to benefit from this book, to be a parent faced with the problem of choosing a school for his offspring, although for anyone in that situation it can be confidently recommended. As the title suggests, it selects from a wide range of topics one particular one to concentrate on. But it soon becomes evident from the whole treatment of the subject that the reader is in fact being invited to get beneath the skin of — well, let us say of the Waldorf teacher of

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any subject whatever. But he is also — and this should particularly interest the prospective parent — being invited to get beneath the skin of any receptive pupil.

A similar book on the teaching of any other subject might perhaps succeed in doing something the same, but, as the author discloses, history is particularly apt for the purpose, because in the Waldorf curriculum, at least with the younger children, it reckons to permeate all the other subjects:

> Steiner encouraged historical work related to other subjects and specifically indicated that history should play its part in the elementary teaching of language, arts, biology, physics, crafts, art instruction, eurythmy and music.

The book itself must of course be consulted for details of the many features peculiar to Rudolf Steiner schools, as distinct from those based on other principles or none: for example, the practice by which all classes below the eighth grade begin the day with a "main lesson" of two hours' duration, taken by the same teacher and continuing with the same subject for a period measured by weeks; or the attention given to the successive steps of instruction that may well be given on the same day, and those for which consecutive days are better because of the night's sleep that intervenes. But is there any possibility of conveying in a few words some notion of the general impression a reader will take away with him of the difference between a Rudolf Steiner school and most, or perhaps all, others? The *essential* difference?

> The teacher does not teach anthroposophical concepts but without an anthroposophical background *and* an anthroposophical inner life he will not be able to move creatively.

The nearest I can come to some such general impression both of the presumed

REVIEWERS

DAVID J. O'BRIEN *teaches history at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester.*

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THOMAS P. WALTERS *is supervisor of evaluations for the Religious Education Office of the Archdiocese of Detroit.*

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inner life of the teachers and of the whole organization and inspiration of the schools would run something like this: a habit (perhaps one should say a Goethean habit) of thinking in terms of metamorphosis rather than of cause and effect:

> If we want the child to understand metamorphosis in man, it is good to first introduce him to metamorphosis in nature. For this reason, the natural history period, a botany period, should precede the treatment of ancient civilizations . . .
>
> When we actually observe how the glory of petals radiates out of a core point in the calyx, we can also gain an artistic impression of how history can move in leaps from moments of crisis. We can also come across moments that take place quietly and then take centuries to flower in all their glory.
>
> The class seven curriculum concerns itself largely with such moments. It deals with less than three hundred years: from 1413 to the seventeenth century. But it is at this time that the calyx developed of that consciousness that is still spreading its petals in the flowering of the twentieth century.

To give only one example, such a mental habit entails progressing beyond Emerson's intuitive perception of the significance for history of the "Lives of Representative Men" to a systematic emphasis on biographies in the teaching of history, an emphasis that is not merely anecdotal precisely because metamorphosis, as a thought-form, entails the wider principle of organicism. It was this principle that was so strongly emphasized by M.C. Richards in her book. It involves the habit of perceiving the Whole potentially existent in the part; and in so doing it lays a foundation for that imaginative and creative thinking which is so badly needed today in almost all contexts — not least in the social one. How many problems would begin to disappear if more and more people were becoming aware, not of the *conflict* between, but of "the polarity of the individual and the social community"!

Poeta nascitur, non fit, poets are born, not made. Anyone who has had anything to do with education, even if only at the

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receiving end, will know that there is such a thing as a "born teacher" — and vice versa. In other words, true education is not a science but an art. Must we say then, *Doctor nascitur, non fit?* If that is the whole truth, the outlook is poor. There are enough poets around — enough at least in so far as the survival of civilization depends on them; but there are certainly not enough teachers. And there will only be more when it comes to be realized, not simply that education is an art, but just *how* it is an art. This liberal, unpretentious, and *wise* little book contributes valuably towards the dawn of such a realization.

Correspondence

(Continued from page 194)

than the idea that he did indeed rise (or was raised), that Peter found the tomb empty, that he appeared to the disciples, ate fish, broke the bread at Emmaus, and finally ascended in Glory. If I cannot believe this, then I would rather join the Unitarians, and live courageously in a world without hope.

What I am really asking is that you give us some "fill" between the world of Schillebeeckx and Moore, and the place where I stand, together as I believe with many other Catholics; — far beyond the Baltimore Catechism and whatever parings of Thomism and religious understanding we managed to imbibe in Catholic institutions of higher learning, but far behind, and disbelieving in what Moore has to say. MARY R. SPENCER

Subjective experience?

Nahant, Mass.

To the Editors: Reading Father Moore on the Resurrection [Jan. 29] reminds one of the apocryphal gospel in which Jesus asked his disciples, "Who do ye say that I am?" And they said, "Thou art the eschatological manifestation of the Ground of All Being, the Kerygma manifested in the conflict and decision of the humanizing process." And Jesus looked at them and said, "What the hell is that?"

Can it be that the time has come to switch the old saw about war and suggest that theology is too important to be left to theologians? Only such a suspicion could justify a mere journalist in wanting to put a word in.

The journalist is clearly limited. He is too familiar with the fact that honest witnesses can disagree about the same event, and can with the passage of time forget, and even alter, the details of what they have seen and heard. Therefore he does not feel this terrible urgency to conclude that all the witnesses are wrong, or have confused a subjective "conversion" for an objective, physical appearance, or are simply making up "stories" to "dramatize" an article of faith.

Commonweal welcomes letters on subjects treated in its pages. Letters of not more than 250 or 300 words naturally have a better chance of being published.

"Lord, when did we see you hungry. . ."

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Father Moore tells us that "the scholars say the appearance stories [of the resurrection] are stories of newborn faith" and "we've all had enough of a 'resurrection' that was as empirically grounded as it was spiritually arid."

I beg to be excluded from that "all," and I suspect there are others: simple folk, fishermen, peasants, publicans, prostitutes, and journalists. Personally, I can think of nothing more spiritually arid than a theory of the resurrection that is based not on objective fact but on a subjective experience of conversion or forgiveness. Nothing would be better calculated to dry up my faith. If "the scholars" could come up with convincing evidence that the resurrection of Jesus Christ was *in no way* a physical phenomenon, then Father Moore's fall-back position might be useful consolation for those who are looking for consolation at any price.

But who are these scholars and what is their evidence? Let's get them out front and center and have a good look at it. I am weary of these continual references to unnamed scholars who have somehow proven that no wise and clever Christian can believe in this, that, or the other.

Meanwhile we simple folk will go on taking St. John's word for it: "It is this same disciple who is the witness to these things; it is he who wrote them down and his testimony, we know, is true" (John 21:24).

And so we will go on believing that when John wrote about doubting Thomas and the finger in the nailprints, or about Peter and the disciples eating fish and bread with the risen Christ on the shore of the Sea of Tiberias, he was not telling stories to dramatize anything at all, but was telling the truth as to what he himself had seen and heard, just like a witness in a court of law. If this in turn scandalizes the scholars, that is too bad. If, on the other hand, they have evidence to show that an apology is in order, by all means let us hear it.

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The author replies:

Surprise surprise! The whole purpose of my article "Experiencing the Resurrection" was to say as clearly and emphatically as possible that I find Schillebeeckx's interpretation of the original encounters with the risen Jesus inadequate to the demands of Christian belief. My original title, which was not used, was "Resurrection in the Christology of Schillebeeckx." But *Commonweal*'s two correspondents line me up *with* Schillebeeckx, finding in both of us the same subjectivism. Ms. Spencer actually quotes, as having my endorsement, the crucial statement by Schillebeeckx which *I* had quoted in order to refute it. I had singled out this passage, because it is Schillebeeckx's most explicit account of "what might have happened"—namely, the disciples discussing the life of Jesus and thus coming to realize who he was. The purpose of my article, on the negative side, was to say that this would not do. To quote from a classic of the screen, "what we seem to have is a failure in communication."

In the *Commonweal* article, as in two earlier articles in the *Downside Review*, I argued that the center of gravity of the

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resurrection problematic has shifted to the area of what Lonergan calls the subject. The people to whom Jesus made himself known after his death as "both Lord and Christ" underwent, in that making-known, a profound inner change that was in effect *the* Christian experience and thus the matrix of the Christian scriptures. This has always been more or less understood — it could hardly fail to be and Christian belief stay Christian belief. But it is only comparatively recently that it has come to appear that what it means for the resurrection to have happened needs to be explicated in terms of the disciples' experience.

The sort of questions being asked, then, are not answered by saying, "Dammit, he came into the room!" — true though that statement may be. I remember, decades ago, driving my students up the wall asking them to envision the difference between one's state of mind on learning that a dear friend recently torpedoed was alive and a prisoner of war — this had recently happened with someone known to us — and the state of mind of the disciples when they met the risen Lord. The question concerns the change of heart and mind.

But before we go any further, a vital point has to be made. To say that the resurrection experience was an inner change of mind and heart is not to say that nothing happened *outside* the mind — such as everyone in the room becoming aware that Jesus was there. The idea of inner experience and outer event as mutually exclusive is a massive error of Bultmann's, an assumption much older than he but powerfully mediated by him, in fact channeled through him into a whole generation of scripture scholars. This mutual exclusivity of subject and object ignores a primordial in-the-world-ness of the mind, without which there could not *be* knowledge. The error is surely operative in Schillebeeckx when he reasons that *since* the resurrection experience was the birth of faith it *could only* be an interior event, not an external one.

But let me reply to my correspondents with some questions. Was the original encounter with the risen Jesus a religious experience, and of a totally transforma-

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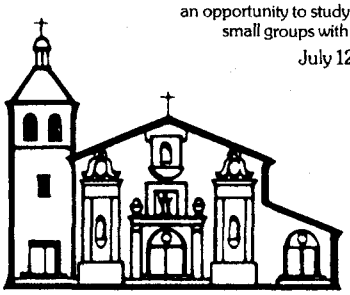

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tive kind? If it was not, how did it issue in the massive assertion of that man's divinity, in a context of the most severely monotheistic tradition the world has ever seen? If it was, is it not the task of the theologian to discuss its nature *as* a religious experience, using what we know from the depositions of mystics and our own gropings? Pursuing this method, I find that this God-encounter goes far beyond other mystical experience, and I was at pains to make this clear. But how can you show that A goes beyond B if you disregard B?

What distresses me most is that what is for one Christian the expression of a passionately held and prayerful faith is read by another Christian as so much gobbledegook. This is symptomatic of a sickness in this Christian body, which non-Christians are not slow to observe and point out.

Mr. Cort says that my article reminds him of the apocryphal dialogue between Jesus and the disciples—"Thou art the eschatological manifestation of the Ground of All Being," and Jesus looked at them and said "What the hell is that?" It occurs to me that the joke works just as well if you substitute "Thou art the homoousion, etc." I am told that the Arians did make jokes of this kind against Athanasius. Taking Christianity seriously, whether intellectually or morally, tends to invite ridicule.

To the main suggestion in my article, that the followers of Jesus had an experience of God that is normally had only by the dead, an experience focused in Jesus as alive and empowered with the Spirit, and that Christian faith is thus at root *experientially* beyond death, neither of my critics pay any attention. As a mere theologian, I think it's quite a helpful idea.

As regards the *nature* of the appearance accounts, I suggest that those correspondents dip into the Jerome Commentary, Reginald Fuller's *The Formation of the Resurrection Narratives*, and the voluminous work of Raymond Brown.

Through both these criticisms of my article there runs the assumption that the description "subjective" means "merely subjective," which obscures the fact that a conversion experience, which is of its nature subjective, is the most object-centered condition that we ever have. Indeed, I suspect that the cause of all the trouble is the ruinous split between subject and object that pervades the modern mind, whether of scripture scholars, theologians, or journalists. A very impressive work that examines the assumptions of many scripture scholars in the context of this radical epistemological confusion is *The Aims of Jesus* by Ben. F. Meyer.

In conclusion, what was it like to meet the risen Jesus? I asked that question forty years ago, and I'm asking it still. It seems a necessary question if one believes that people did.

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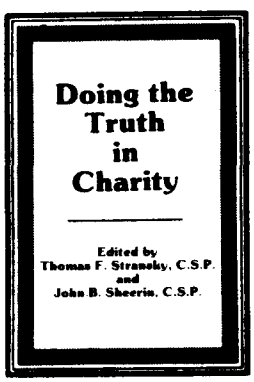

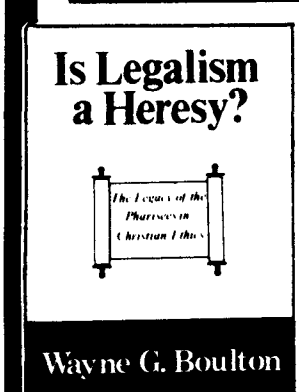

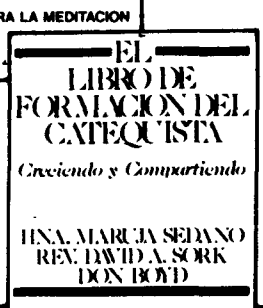

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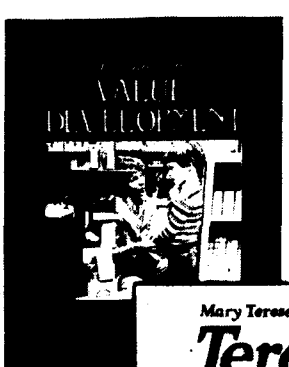

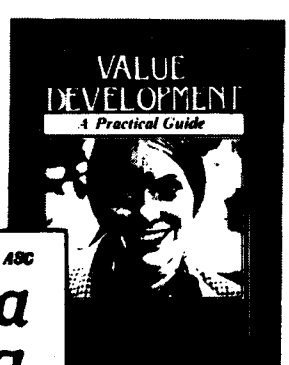

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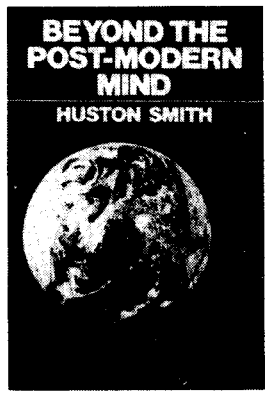

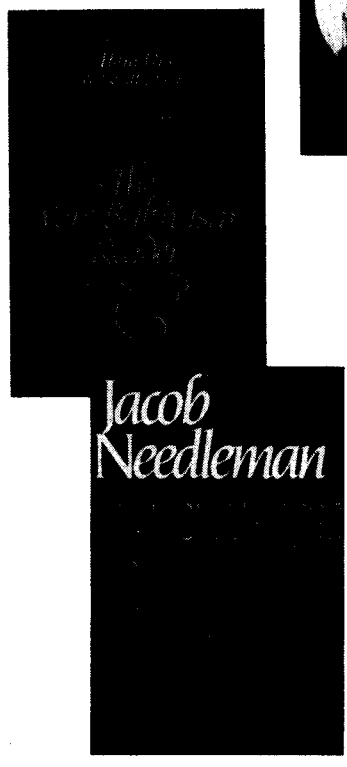

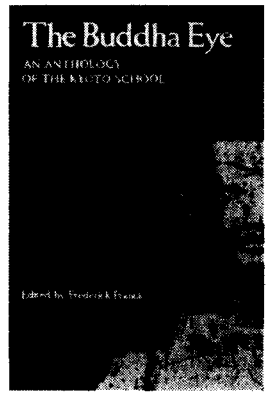

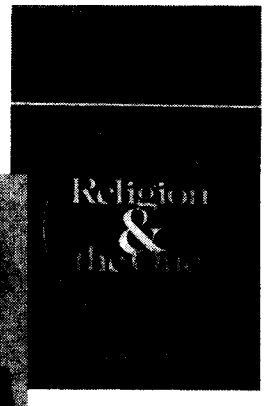

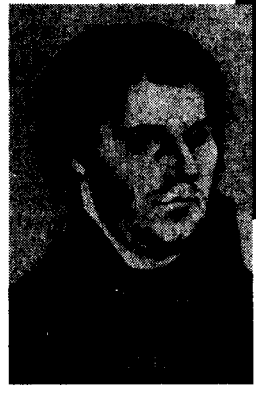

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